

TASMANIA'S CHINESE HERITAGE:

AN HISTORICAL RECORD OF CHINESE SITES IN
NORTH EAST TASMANIA.

by

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STATEMENT

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university and to the best of the author's knowledge and belief the thesis contains no copy or paraphrase of material previously published or written by other persons except when due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

Dedication

To Mark;
without whom this
road would never have
been trod.

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ABSTRACT

The Chinese came to Tasmania (1875 - 1890) to work the alluvial tin fields of the North East. They came as sojourners to make quick fortunes before returning to China. They comprised the largest non-European ethnic community in 19th Century Tasmania.

The number of Chinese was never great, reaching a peak of approximately 1000 - 1500 in 1887, but they played a very important role in the settlement and development of the North East. Tin mining was the main industry in the region and accounted for $\frac{1}{4}$ of the colony's export earnings during the 1880s. The Chinese were brought in as cheap labour for the mines in the late 1870s and early 1880s, but, by a combination of circumstances and perserverance, they quickly established themselves in their own right. By 1882, Chinese were more numerous than Europeans in the alluvial tin mines and they remained in the majority until about 1897 (by which time alluvial mining had diminished in importance). After the introduction of restrictive immigration laws in 1887 and a recession in tin mining in 1888, the number of Chinese gradually declined. Those that remained form the roots of the Tasmanian population of the 1980s.

Very little has been recorded of the history of the Chinese in Tasmania, and this survey of historical Chinese sites can only be regarded as a preliminary step towards understanding a period of history which has all but vanished today. The project located and recorded 41 sites and includes 15 oral history recordings; this forms the most comprehensive collection or primary source material available on the Chinese to date.

The archaeological record is currently an untapped source of information on the Chinese. However, these sites are currently under threat from forestry, fossicking, and small-scale mining. It is important to preserve the sites as sources of culturally significant information and vital to protect them as culturally significant fabric, since very few structures have survived from this era of Tasmanian history.

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1. INTRODUCTION TO THE SITE SURVEY AND METHODOLOGY

The Chinese played an important role in the early development and settlement of north east Tasmania. They comprise a significant ethnic group which has been largely overlooked by Tasmanian historians. This lack of documentation creates serious gaps in our knowledge of the region, gaps which are widening with the passage of time. Fortunately, there are still people in the area whose lives span the era when Chinese miners were the cornerstone of the north east Tasmanian economy, and when Chinese culture was a focal point of interest for the surrounding community. Memories, however, do not reach back so far, and the accounts of the living mainly refer to the period of the decline of the Chinese in Tasmania. Other sources of information are required, and this study has been directed towards an evaluation of the historical record left behind in the landscape of the region.

The prime objective of this study is to identify and record sites associated with Chinese miners c.1870-1900 with a view to their preservation and information potential. It is hoped that the sites will yield information on the lifestyle of the Chinese which is not available from other sources, and will lead to an appreciation of the value of the sites before they are completely destroyed by fossicking, forestry and fire.

An important aspect of the study was the collection of 15 oral history recordings from people of Chinese descent or who had extensive dealings with the Chinese. These recordings provide valuable information on the lifestyle and character of Chinese miners and their relationship with the European community. Although they are limited to the period (post 1900) when the Chinese population was declining, they contain some detailed descriptions of Chinese dwellings, Joss houses and Chinese New Year festivities. The Queen Victoria Museum, Launceston, is in the process of transcribing these tapes. This is very time consuming but I have been able to include transcriptions of four of the interviews in Appendix 3.

The Queen Victoria Museum has a particular interest in the Chinese as the Museum houses one of the finest collections of ceremonial Chinese artefacts in Australia. The contents of the Weldborough Joss house were donated to the Museum by the Chinese community in 1934. Thus rehoused, as a museum exhibit, the Joss house continued to function as a place of worship for the Launceston Chinese community.

In recent years (c.1980) it had come to the attention of the Museum and the Tasmanian National Parks and Wildlife Service that Chinese sites, which had long been a playground for bottle collectors, were being destroyed by fossickers using bulldozers and ploughs in search of bottles and other relics. The need for a record of sites became more urgent as a result of this threat.

The first step towards preserving historic Chinese sites has been taken by surveying sites and compiling a list. The next stage would logically be to complete the listing by including market gardens, slate and gold mining sites in the Tamar region, (Golconda, Lisle, Back Creek, Beaconsfield), and commercial and domestic premises in the city of Launceston.

1.1 SURVEY METHOD:

The Chinese worked on alluvial mines throughout north east Tasmania which is an area of approximately 10,000km². The resources available for the site survey consisted of one person for a period of 6 months and a limited travelling budget. Clearly, it was impossible to attempt a complete survey with these resources.

This survey covered an area of approximately 2,000km² centred on the major tin mining areas of the North East (i.e. Branhholm, Derby, Moorina, Pioneer and Weldborough). This was the location of the largest Chinese population in Tasmania. Two gold mining sites, Mathinna and Lefroy, were included to extend the range of sites and to extend the survey into different regions of the North East. Both towns were centres of large Chinese populations.

The survey covered a wide area of the North East attempting to locate a number of sites in each region rather than an exhaustive record of any particular region. This approach was taken, as the usefulness of a preliminary survey is mainly to identify a broad range of sites over a large area so that future intensive surveys can be planned on a broad factual base.

As the survey proceeded decisions had to be made to exclude certain areas due to insufficient resources. The Tamar region, the City of Launceston, and the gold mining areas of Beaconsfield, Lefroy, Back Creek, Golconda and Lisle formed a discreet grouping of sites associated mainly with gold mining, market gardening and commerce. This area had a small but generally stable Chinese population with the usual fluctuation in the gold mining population. The area is sufficiently distinct from the tin mining regions to warrant separate attention, and, being within easy access of the City of Launceston, some of the logistical and practical problems of site recording should be lessened. The area was excluded with the view to a future study covering this region but one site (Lefroy) was surveyed to ensure that the area was not overlooked.

A similar approach was taken in the Mathinna, Mangana gold mining region. Several sites were located in order to represent the region but a far more intensive survey of the area could be productive.

Local knowledge was used extensively as a means for locating sites before going into the field. Older members of the community were interviewed, providing an oral history record which is stored on audio tapes in the archives of the Queen Victoria Museum. Whilst the oral history project was secondary to the aims of this survey, the opportunity to conduct some interviews was fortuitous and given the lack of written records the oral histories are a major source of information on the Chinese.

Sites were located by discussion with old residents, tin miners, foresters and bottle collectors, some of whom acted as guides in the field. This process produced a 100 per cent success rate in locating sites and allowed greater coverage than a sampling programme, given the limited human resources. Old mining maps were also used to locate sites. This is a much less precise method for locating mines or miner's

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dwellings, as mineral leases shown on the maps usually cover an area of 20 acres and some leases were worked very lightly or not at all.

1.2 LIMITATIONS AND BIAS IN THE SITE SURVEY:

As previously discussed, limitations on resources necessitated some limits to the area surveyed. This survey concentrated on sites associated with Chinese tin miners, as these were the largest group, and other occupations such as gold mining, market gardening and commercial activities are poorly represented.

The reliance on local knowledge for locating sites may have introduced a bias towards sites in the vicinity of current human activity in the region and therefore towards sites which have been disturbed. This is certainly the case where information was supplied by foresters or bottle collectors. For example, forestry activities in the Cascades region uncovered several sites which probably would not have been located in undisturbed forest. Conversely, the Blue Tier is an area where very little current human activity takes place and it proved very difficult to locate sites on the Tier.

It is difficult to assess the extent of this bias as it is unlikely that many Chinese tin mining sites have escaped re-working by future generations of miners. Mining maps could be used effectively to pinpoint Chinese leases in areas less likely to have been disturbed by subsequent human activity.

Several sites became known after the fieldwork for this report had been completed. These include the Cornwall Coal Mine at Fingal, the Australian Slate Company, slate quarry at Bangor, Back Creek and Turquoise Bluff.

1.3 THE SITE RECORD:

Once located the sites were recorded by written description, photograph, survey diagram (in some cases) and measurement. Any additional information about a site was also recorded on the site record form. This included oral sources, early maps or diagrams, early photographs and newspaper references. The precise location of sites is given to the nearest 100m using the Tasmania 1:25,000 Tasmap series, edition 1, 1981; when this was available. When other maps were used the full map reference appears on the site record. Access is also described to facilitate the re-location of sites.

Sites were classified into nine site categories:- Chinese towns, Joss houses, pig ovens, mining camps, miner's dwellings, mines, market gardens, cemeteries and memorials, dwellings and shops. Forty-one sites were located in all.

The site record is preceded by a detailed Chapter on the history of Chinese settlement in the North East, to provide a historical context for the sites. There are many gaps in this history which could be filled by thorough historical research. This was beyond the scope of this study, which has concentrated resources on the field documentation. There is also a wealth of information contained in the oral histories (Appendix 3). In addition to providing a

background to Chinese immigration, the history chapter establishes the importance of the Chinese as a colonising, developmental, economic and cultural force in the North East, and sketches an outline of the historical geography of Chinese settlement in the region.

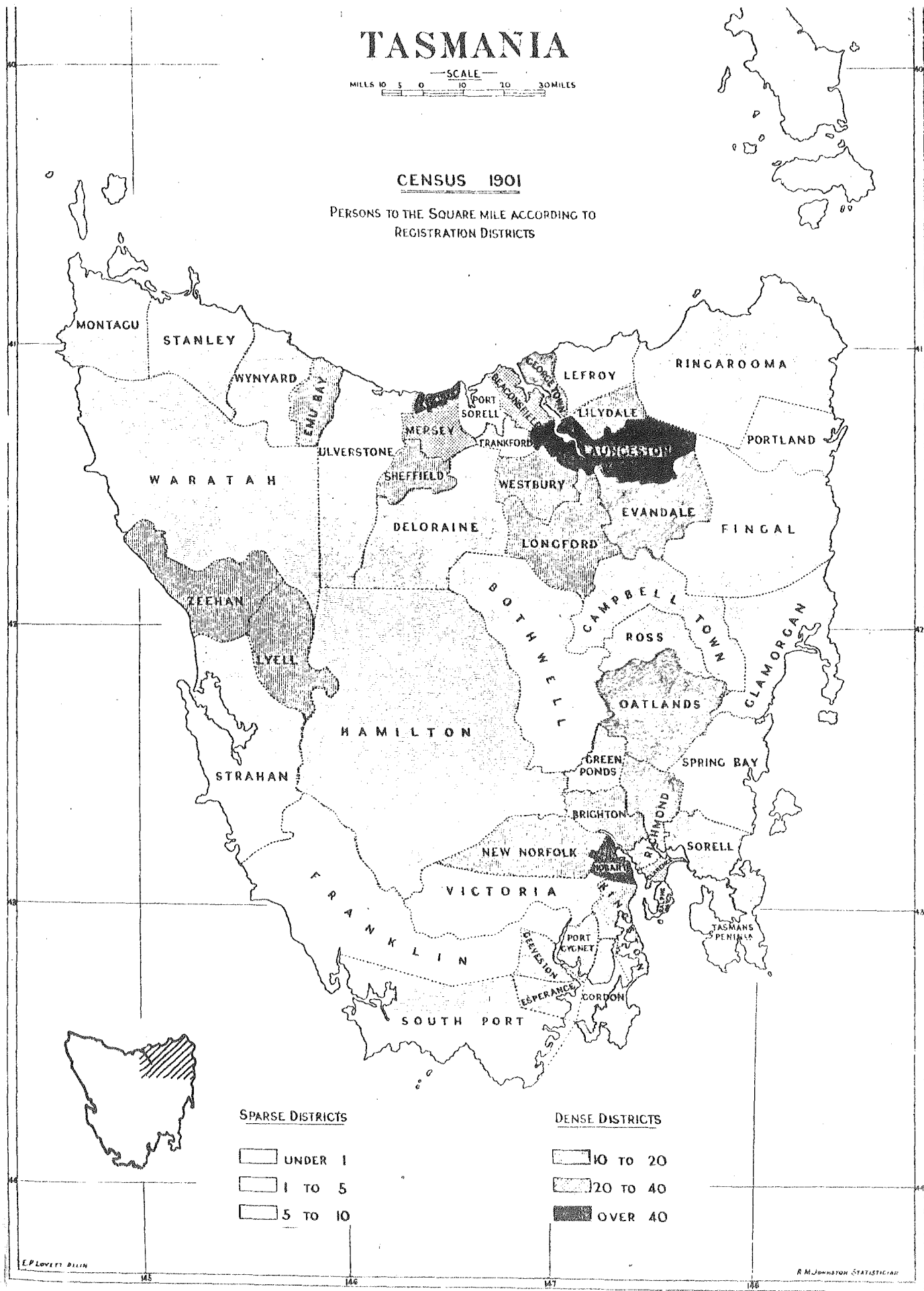
A summary of the significance of Chinese sites and an argument for their preservation as sources of culturally significant information and, in some cases, as culturally significant fabric, is presented in the final chapter (page 108). It is difficult to establish priorities for preservation on the basis of the superficial examination provided by this survey. However, the final chapter includes recommendations for preservation of at least one site from each site category; and lists those sites considered the most urgent or worthy of preservation given current information.

The appendices to this report are very large as they contain original material which is not yet available from any other source. Only 4 out of 15 oral history recordings were transcribed in time for inclusion in this report. However, a further report is anticipated which will contain the full oral history record.

The full photographic record of sites and all oral history tapes are lodged in the archives of the Queen Victoria Museum.

MAP 1: Map of Tasmania Showing Registration Districts, 1901.

Source: 1901 Census of Tasmania.



2. HISTORY OF THE TASMANIAN CHINESE

2.1 BACKGROUND TO CHINESE IMMIGRATION

Chinese tin miners, who were amongst the pioneers of Tasmania's North East, have been largely overlooked by historians.¹ Although they were not numerous (numbering approximately 1,000 at their peak in 1891), they were very important in the history of the region. Their ability to work poor ground and persevere when tin prices were low provided the region with a continuity of population which would otherwise have been lacking in the rapidly shifting fortunes of the North East mining communities. Between 1886 and 1896 Chinese tin miners outnumbered their European counterparts throughout the region and in some areas by as much as 10:1.² The Chinese also constitute the largest group of non-European immigrants to early Tasmania.

The Chinese came to Tasmania largely as an off-shoot of immigration to the famed gold fields of Victoria and New South Wales. However, it was conditions in China at the time which determined the type of Chinese immigrant, their attitudes to their new 'home', and the patterns of settlement which occurred.

Officially, emigration from China was prohibited during the Ching dynasty. The policy was severe but it was difficult to enforce and during the 17th century large numbers of Chinese had privately migrated to South East Asia. Most of the early Chinese immigrants to Australia were Cantonese, from the Canton delta region of the southern province of Kwangtung. This is a coastal province close to the Pacific Ocean and exposed to Western impact during the 19th century. Kwangtung province is a fertile valley isolated from central China by mountain ranges. Life in the province in the 1880 s was characterised by food shortages and social and political unrest.

The heavily cultivated Canton delta region was overpopulated (30 million people in the 1860 s) and suffered severe floods and droughts. Shortages of food and land caused widespread social unrest and gave rise to the White Lotus Revolt of 1796-97, the Taiping Rebellion 1850-64 (and the Farmers Movement of the 1920 s). Clan warfare was fierce, and widespread opium smoking contributed to the collapse of the economic foundations of Kwangtung society.³

To survive these problems clans relied on their fighting strength and wealth to gain and protect their lands. Women worked the land and the men were trained in combat or sent away to earn money for arms, land, and to provide for their families. Lineage solidarity discouraged the emigration of females and put the prosperity and strength of the lineage above individual comfort. It penetrated the organisations which facilitated migration; the money lenders, commercial firms and agents, and affected the organisation of Chinese labour in Australia.⁴

In 1842, the treaty of Nanking opened the five ports of Canton, Amoy, Fuchou, Ningpo and Shanghai to foreign trade, and although emigration remained illegal until the 1860 Peking Convention, shipping routes made emigration easier, in many cases, than internal migration.

Meanwhile a labour shortage of considerable proportions existed in Australia. In 1848 colonial pastoralists in Victoria and New South Wales voted to enlist Asian workmen and the Chinese 'coolie trade' started up in Australia.⁵

The coolie trade was already responsible for shipping large numbers of indentured Chinese labourers to Malaya, Hawaii, Peru, Cuba and the West Indies. It is difficult to determine the extent of slavery involved in this trade as the miserable conditions which prevailed in Southern China at the time were sufficient incentive for hundreds of thousands to seek to leave by any means possible. Certainly the Chinese who emigrated in this way were in the invidious position of owing their livelihood to their clan (who retained a proprietorial interest in the productivity of the emigré), and also being virtually owned by an unknown employer for the period of their contractual arrangement (usually about three years).

In her excellent book on the Victorian Chinese, Cronin states that the first shipment of 120 indentured Chinese labourers arrived in Australia in December, 1848 from Amoy, through the agency of James Tait, a coolie merchant.⁶ Whilst this may certainly have been the beginning of the main influx of Chinese to Australia, a want of skilled labour in Tasmania had prompted the importation of nine Chinese mechanics* decades earlier.

On the 15th July, 1830 nine Chinese mechanics arrived in Launceston aboard the NIMROD from China. They had been brought in by J. Flaherty in an effort to start up a trade in Chinese labour. There was a lot of interest but the venture did not succeed because of a dispute over the payment of passage money. His advertisement in the Launceston Advertiser read:

"CHINESE MECHANICS"

"The Undersignen, (sic.) intending to remain in this Colony, and expecting a vessel from China in the early part of the ensuing season, is induced (from the numerous applications he has had for the Chinese Mechanics lately arrived per "Nimrod"), to offer to import any number of men, within fifty, either Carpenters, Joiners, Blacksmiths, or House Servants, &c., that may be required by any Gentleman desirous of entering into arrangement for them. They will be indentured for three years from date of their arrival in the Colony.

All applications to be made before the 25th of August, at the Counting-house of Mr. Gavin Ralston when particulars of terms will be made known.

J. Flaherty."

* The term 'mechanic' at the time applied to anyone employed in manual occupations, a handicraftsman. It is assumed from the Chinese businesses in Tasmania in 1835 that these men were mainly carpenters.⁸

8.

It is estimated that less than 3,000 Chinese emigrated to Australia in this way.⁹ However, when news of the discovery of gold reached China in 1852, Chinese began flocking to Australia by the credit ticket system.

Under the credit ticket system fares were borrowed from kinsmen at home and overseas. Chinese merchants in Australia played an important role in advancing money to their own kin. In return the emigr  was contracted to work under the merchant or headman for very low wages for several years.

During this period of indebtedness the Chinese labourer would often find himself working in conditions which were, to his neighbouring Australian workers at least, akin to slavery. This became the source of widespread racial tension, with the Chinese accused of undermining the wages and conditions of Australian workers.

Chinese immigration to Australia was thus strongly regulated by the structure of the lineage or kinship system in China. Lineage advancement and loyalty also affected the Chinese attitude to work and settlement in Australia, encouraging frugality, thrift and industry and the transfer of earnings back to China. The majority of Chinese labourers in Australia were supporting wives and families in China. They were seeking quick fortunes to enable their speedy return and thus they favoured labour intensive, short-term projects rather than long-term capital intensive work. They washed alluvial tin and gold in preference to working the more time consuming quartz deposits and set up import-export and other commercial enterprises from which quick profits could be won.¹⁰

Once here some of the more successful Chinese found conditions in Australia to their liking. Having accumulated some capital from mining, many bought a small plot of land and made their fortunes from supplying the gold fields with fresh vegetables. This provided a very healthy livelihood for the experienced Cantonese market gardeners and by 1891 they outnumbered Chinese miners in New South Wales by 2:1¹¹. A similar pattern emerged in Victoria by 1901¹² and in Tasmania by 1921¹³. It was this group, along with merchants, which formed the core of the Chinese number who were to make Australia their home.

2.2 THE TASMANIAN CHINESE

The number of Chinese in Tasmania was never great, probably between 1,000-1,500 at their peak in the late 1880 s. Most were sojourners and stayed only long enough to make their fortunes (5-20 years) never intending to make this country home. The main influx of Chinese began in the late 1870 s to work the tin fields of the North East. The early history of the Tasmanian Chinese is closely tied to the fluctuating fortunes of this industry. Gold was also an important lure, particularly in the early days, but never employed large numbers of Chinese for very long.

Unlike the majority of Chinese immigrants arriving in the 1870 s and 1880 s, the first Chinese were mainly skilled labourers and small businessmen. Very little has been written about these men who arrived 3 decades ahead of most of their countrymen.

The exact number of Chinese resident in Tasmania prior to the

census of 1870 is not known. An exhaustive search of shipping and naturalisation records is required to identify the number of arrivals and departures of Chinese prior to 1870, and the rewards are likely to be small. Immigration records and newspapers provide the only accurate source of information for this early period.

The census of 1870 and 1881 almost certainly underestimate the number of Chinese and provide only snapshot pictures of the population which fluctuated dramatically from year to year in the mining districts (a census was held each decade after 1881). The difficulty of obtaining accurate census data in the remote North East, where miners worked in scattered small groups with only pack horse trails for communication, would have been doubled when dealing with the Chinese who were reticent in their dealings with officials and spoke little or no English. The Chinese also tended to work in isolation from European mining settlements.

Thus census data may be slightly misleading. For example, the census of 1870 counted only 13 Chinese resident in Tasmania. However, newspaper reports and shipping records show that, as well as the nine mechanics who arrived in 1830, there were at least nine more arrivals that decade, at least seven more by the early 1850 s and ten more to 1870¹⁴. Most of these may have been sojourners coming to escape the harsh conditions in China only to return as soon as their fortunes were made. Certainly, like most fortune seekers, they would have been amongst the numbers flocking to the Victorian gold fields in the 1850 s and this may explain the low count in 1870. However, in late 1870 nineteen Chinese miners arrived to work the gold fields at Mangana¹⁵ and a newspaper report of December, 1870 speaks of twelve Chinese miners arriving in November of that year to work the Back Creek gold mines.¹⁶

As early as 1835 Launceston had a number of Chinese businesses established in Elizabeth Street. There were at least two grocery shops, one run by John Aquie¹⁷ (arrived Launceston 6/6/1830) and another by a gentleman calling himself Joan Wife¹⁸ (the Chinese frequently Anglicised their names, particularly when they took European wives). There is also mention of a Chinamen's Cedar Yard in Elizabeth Street in 1835, adjoining Joan Wife's store.¹⁹

The history of this early period remains uncovered and would provide fascinating study, as the Chinese community in Launceston, although small (39 in 1891), produced some of the city's great early entrepreneurs and developers (Henry Tom Sing, James Ah Catt, Chin Ah Kaw, James Chung Gon).

2.3 THE FIRST INFLUX OF CHINESE TO TASMANIA (1870 s)

The earliest Chinese miners to arrive in Tasmania were a group of 19 carefully selected men who were brought in, in October 1870, on the initiative of Mr. Robert Carter (a mine manager). They were to work the marginal alluvial gold fields around the Black Boy (renamed Mathinna in 1882). Gold had been discovered in the vicinity as early as 1855 but, although several attempts were made, there had been little success at winning payable gold.

The Chinese were welcomed as experienced, industrious and frugal workers who could be relied on to make the best profit available from the diggings.

Mr. James Peters (of Peters, Barnard & Co.) a Launceston businessman, arranged for the immigration of the Chinese using the services of Messrs. Lowe Kong Meng and Co. of Melbourne. The selected 19 men were mainly experienced diggers from Ararat, Bendigo and New Zealand. They were to test the ground and if they reported favourably on the prospects, there was speculation that they would be followed by one to two thousand of their countrymen.

The Examiner newspaper reports the event:

"Of the thirty-eight steerage passengers brought by the S.S. Tamar yesterday, nineteen were Chinamen, and their presence in the streets of the town during the day excited no little astonishment and curiosity." ... "The social aspect of the question respecting the importation of these Mongolians is an important one, and we do not propose to deal with it in this paper. But only one opinion can exist as to their adaptability to the purpose for which they are intended, and if alluvial digging is ever to become a permanent source of wealth in Tasmania these men will very soon prove it." ²⁰

Gold was certainly to be found at the Black Boy (Mathinna) and in the neighbouring Mangana fields (where, in 1852, payable gold was first discovered in Tasmania) but, like most mining communities, fortunes fluctuated as rapidly as the population. In 1871 Black Boy was little more than a post-office and in 1872 the population was about 550, declining again in the mid-1870s to revive in the late 1880s and become a thriving gold mining town. The population peaked at approximately 2,000 during the 1890s.

It would appear, however, that the 19 Chinese miners had limited success at Black Boy as within 3 months they had removed to newly discovered ground at Back Creek. The Examiner reports in February 1871 that the manager of the Back Creek Co. lease, Mr. Sagerberg, arranged for them to work his company's ground. ²¹ Six worked on the Grand Junction mine and six on the Albion claim. ²² The latter group obtained 5 oz. of gold in their first week and the Examiner comments on their success:

"It is to be presumed that the directors will now take steps to make some permanent arrangement with the Celestials for working the claim on tribute." ²³

There was continued speculation that this was the beginning of an influx of Chinese miners to Tasmania's alluvial gold fields:

"The Chinese have already obtained a footing amongst us and judging by the present indications it will not be long before they form a permanent part of our population. The complete success of the Chinese diggers at Back Creek is certain to attract over many of their countrymen." ²⁴

This statement (and others like it) were born of an over optimistic view of the gold fields and perhaps a measure of alarm at the imagined influx of Chinese to Tasmania. Although another 30 Chinese were sent for, to sink for a deep lead on the Back Creek Co.'s lease, the success of the mine was short lived and by early May 1871 some mining parties had moved on to The Springs (later named Lefroy). By 1873 the gold commissioner, Mr. Bernard Shaw, wrote that the once active Back Creek had diminished to a population of ten, eight of whom were Chinese.²⁵ In September of the following year the mines were all but abandoned and the Examiner's North East correspondent writes:

"I have been informed by a Chinaman that the reef found by the Chinamen at Back Creek does not bear any gold."²⁶

Newspaper reports also mention Chinese miners at Brandy Creek (renamed Beaconsfield in 1879 due to pressure from temperance advocates) in 1871 and 1872.²⁷ At least six of these arrived in Tasmania in June 1872.

..."A party of 6 Chinamen with well stocked baskets borne on their shoulders from bamboo yokes, and with tools and other appliances, left the hospitable stores of Messrs. Peters, Barnard & Co. (who gave many miners free lodging until they obtained their first gold) early yesterday morning to proceed on board the steamer Annie en route for the Brandy Creek diggings on the West Tamar. Ah You, a Chinese fisherman, arrived from Melbourne with this party last week and he proceeded to Ilfracombe with the intention of establishing a fishing station and fish-curing depot in that locality. Mr. Tom Sing, a very intelligent Chinaman, and a good interpreter, having visited Melbourne on matrimonial speculation returned in September. The Chinese held a grand festival at their Joss-house at the stores of Messrs. Peters, Barnard & Co. in Cameron Street."²⁸

The stores of Messrs. Peters, Barnard and Co. housed a Chinese Joss house and was used as a lodging house and centre for Chinese miners. The Examiner describes another festive occasion held 3 months later when a party of miners returned from Brandy Creek bringing with them a parcel of gold valued at £26.00, included in which was a gold nugget worth about 35s. The Chinese described the expedition as not very good but after consulting the Joss they returned to the field. There were 20 Chinese present on this occasion which involved a feast and offerings to the Joss. The Chinese laughed and joked merrily until the ceremony commenced.²⁹

Again, at Brandy Creek, the Chinese appear to have been the last miners working marginal claims.³⁰

There was also a large party of Chinese working at the Hellyer gold fields in the North West in 1873, but their stay was short-lived and they may well have been from the original 50-60 Chinese working in the Back Creek and Lefroy mines.

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It is interesting to note the comments of the Commissioner of Mines for the Hellyer field, Mr. H.B. Willis:

"In the beginning of the year 1873, the Chinese population, amounting to some thirty-seven, left the River Hellyer to proceed to Nine Mile Springs, where some of their countrymen are reported to have hit on good ground. None of the Chinese have since returned. It is an acknowledged fact in Victoria that the Chinese make very bad pioneers on any newly discovered gold fields, and this has been borne out in the present instance. Had the Chinese resorted to the gullies and terraces at some little distance from the river, where the Europeans have found all the largest and best gold, no doubt they would have been very successful, but they could not be induced to leave the rivers, giving as the reason the fear they had of being lost in the dense scrub which abounds on both its banks." ³¹

The pattern which emerges through this early period is of Chinese labour being used in the hope of proving alluvial claims which Europeans had been unable to work profitably. The miners moved constantly between gold fields but the returns from these ventures were apparently insufficient to attract large numbers of Chinese to the Tasmanian diggings.

It is perhaps surprising that more Chinese did not come to Tasmania during the early 1870 s. Nine Mile Springs (later Lefroy) was prospering, gold had been discovered at Waterhouse in 1869, and a small rush occurred starting the township of Lyndhurst. Gold was also discovered at Beaconsfield (Brandy Creek) in 1870. In addition to these, and many other small finds, Tasmania offered open entry to the Chinese and therefore, the opportunity to become naturalised and obtain citizenship rights throughout Australia.

By this time conditions on the Victorian and New South Wales gold fields were very bad for the Chinese. Victoria enacted restrictive legislation in 1855 to reduce the influx of Chinese (who numbered 25,500 in that colony) at the time and South Australia followed suit. Neither attempt was successful. New South Wales introduced an Immigration Restriction Act in 1861, following the race riots at Lambing Flats from December 1860, which culminated in the terrible events of June 1861 when Chinese camps were plundered and burnt to the ground and the defenceless Chinese were robbed, beaten savagely and several Chinese scalps were taken. From 1862 departures of Chinese exceeded arrivals and numbers declined steadily until the late 1870 s. ³²

By contrast the Tasmanian attitude towards the Chinese was welcoming, though certainly not without prejudiced elements. Letters to the editor of the Launceston Examiner express a range of views, but the general approval for the industrious, honest Chinese far outweighs racial distrust. Whilst a note of caution is sounded in some correspondence regarding the wisdom of mixing European and Asian peoples, the prevailing attitude was that the Chinese were needed to develop Tasmania's infant mining industry. ³³

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The vested interest of mine managers no doubt accounts for much of this apparent tolerance, but Tasmania's resistance to the introduction of restrictive immigration laws in 1881 & 1887 against pressure from the other colonies, lends some weight to the notion of a more tolerant attitude prevailing throughout the Colony.³⁴

However, these inducements were insufficient to overcome the economic reality of life in Tasmania. The Colony was in the grip of a severe depression which continued into the mid-1870 s. From 1870 to 1875 emigration to the mainland was higher than at any time since the Victorian gold rushes. Thus the 60-70 Chinese arrivals from 1870-1872 were probably the main group of Chinese to come to Tasmania until tin mining started up in 1875. Even this small number represented a significant proportion of the total number of miners employed on alluvial gold fields in the North East. In 1872 (after many small rushes had died down) there were only approximately 310 men employed in alluvial gold mining.³⁵ This total presumably includes the Chinese (see Table 1).

The numbers employed in alluvial gold mining between 1872-1881 have been compiled by B. Easteal.³⁶ Table 1 shows the decline from 1872 and the revival in 1878 following major gold discoveries at Beaconsfield, Lisle and Mathinna. The numbers mining from 1869-1871 would probably have been in the region of 1,000 at the peak on the Waterhouse, Lefroy and Hellyer gold fields.

TABLE 1: Average No. of Persons Employed on Alluvial Gold Fields, 1872-1881 (All Nationalities).

Source: Easteal, B.V., 1966; The Chinese in Tasmania 1870-1900; B.A. (Hons.) thesis, University of Tasmania; (unpublished).

<u>Year</u>	<u>Persons Employed</u>
1872	310
1873	130
1874	55
1875	26
1876	10
1877	91
1878	545
1879	1535
1880	794
1881	331

The revival in gold mining in 1878 may have been important in attracting a new influx of Chinese to Tasmania. However, the consensus of opinion is that it was tin, discovered in 1874 by George Renison Bell, that was the important attraction.³⁷ From 1876 to 1881 some 800 Chinese arrived and settled on the tin mining fields of the North East.³⁸

2.4 CHINESE TIN MINERS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NORTH EAST (1880's)

The North East was a sparsely populated region with only approximately 7,000 people engaged mainly in agriculture, prior to the discovery of tin in 1874, 13 kilometres from the mouth of the Boobyalla River. There were few roads and farming settlements were linked by rough bridle tracks. Such roads as there were, were in a pitiful condition, being almost impassable in winter due to mud holes which would swallow

horses and bullocks to their shoulders.³⁹ Boobyalla was the main port for the tin mining districts of Branhholm, Weldborough, Mount Cameron, Moorina and the many mines along the Ringarooma River. Bridport, St. Georges Bay and Tomahawk were other ports serving the region.

The lack of adequate transportation systems was an important factor in the developmental struggles of the region. Tin ore had to be carted by pack horse to Boobyalla and shipped to Launceston for treatment. Machinery for the mines was dragged in by bullock and horse teams over bush roads which were little more than deep bog holes in many places. Agitation for roads and railways began in the early 1860 s and continued for many decades. The first railway line was finally opened on 9 August, 1889, connecting Scottsdale to Launceston. This was extended to Branhholm on 12 July, 1911 and Herrick in 1919.

Moorina was the most important town in the area during the 80 s as it was the main distributional centre. Situated on the junction of the Scottsdale-Weldborough Road and the main North road to Boobyalla Port, Moorina was linked with all the main mining centres. Only the Blue Tier mines remained isolated using the St. Georges Bay Port until the road from Lottah to Weldborough was opened in the late 1890 s.

Between 1874-1877 all the major tin deposits were discovered in the North East. Most of the early mines were small co-operative ventures employing the pick, shovel, barrow and sluice box method used on the gold fields. This type of mining suited the Chinese as it required very little capital. The Chinese were able to compete well with Europeans particularly as there was a lack of capital to pioneer the new areas. The cost of transporting the tin through difficult terrain, cutting new roads and shipping the raw metal to Launceston for smelting, was high. Mine owners quickly adopted the tribute system which involved letting their claims to miners who were paid a fixed price for the tin raised (between 40/- to 45/- a cwt.). This was cheaper and surer than paying wages at 8/4 per day. The mines were let to the lowest bidder and the Chinese were willing to take a lower price than their European competitors.⁴⁰

By 1878 the Chinese were present in all the major tin mining centres of the North East, Weldborough (originally Thomas Plains), Branhholm, Gladstone (Mount Cameron), Pioneer (Bradshaw's Creek), Moorina (Krushka's Bridge), with the single exception of Derby (Brothers Home). Derby was the location of the richest tin mine in the region, 'The Briseis' (originally the Brothers Home Mine). The Chinese were probably excluded from Derby precisely because this was such a rich mine. By 1876 many of the first small mines at Derby had consolidated into a 220 acre lease named the Briseis. In 1883 the syndicate formed The Briseis Tin Mining Co. N.L. which was registered in Victoria. A large amount of capital was invested in heavy machinery and the construction of a tunnel, of dams and of water courses.

The Chinese presence on the tin fields was further consolidated in 1879 when many European miners left the diggings for the Lisle gold rush. Mark Ireland (a mine manager and later historian of the period) describes this as a crucial point

in the history of tin mining, as the Chinese remained on the tin fields taking up ground on tribute and buying tin leases from Europeans who wanted to get away.⁴¹ The price of tin had fallen in 1879 aiding this process as Europeans were squeezed out of mining. Exports of tin for this year however, were higher (4316 tons for the whole colony, including the Mt. Bischoff mine in the North West which probably accounted for almost half of the total) than for 1878 or any subsequent year to 1890. The total value of tin exports was £303,203.⁴²

The following year the price of tin increased allowing the Chinese good profits which enabled them to take up their own claims or work for Chinese contributors or leaseholders. Thus their position was no longer solely as cheap labour for the mines. In this year (1880) the value of tin exports was £341,736 which represented almost a quarter of the colony's total export product (£1,481,330).⁴³ By 1882 the Chinese were more numerous than European miners in all but two fields in the Ringarooma district.⁴⁴ Figures compiled by B. Easteal (Table 1) show that this position continued until 1897.

TABLE 2: Number of Miners employed in Alluvial and Quartz Mining on North East and East Coast from 1886-1900. Figures from Secretary of Mines Reports, probably only approximate.⁴⁵

Source: Easteal, B.V., 1966; The Chinese in Tasmania 1870-1900; B.A. (Hons.) thesis, University of Tasmania; (unpublished).

Year	<u>North East</u>			<u>East</u>		Total
	Chinese	Euro.	Sub-Total	Chinese	Euro.	
1882						1716
1886	520	450	970	227	114	1311
1887	648	414	1062	not stated		-
1888	605	385	990	"		-
1891	* 486	262	748	"		-
1892	375	250	625	"		-
1896	303	275	578	152	376	1106
1897	244	256	500	82	630	1212
1898	196	256	452	70	567	1089
1899	180	272	452	63	599	1114
1900	173	336	509	76	755	1340

* The census of 1891 shows 695 Chinese tin miners in the North East.

Accompanying this increase in numbers was growing hostility from European miners who were being displaced by the Chinese. By 1880 the Chinese were said to outnumber Europeans by 10:1 on the Branhholm fields.⁴⁶ Large Chinese communities also existed at Moorina, Weldborough, Emu Flat, Garibaldi and Gladstone. These were the major centres of tin mining in the North East in 1881 with populations of 763 in the Moorina, Weld River and Ringarooma River mines; 765 at Weldborough (then known as Thomas's Plains), 174 at Mount Cameron (Gladstone); and 40 at the Blue Tier.⁴⁷ The census of 1887⁴⁸ gives the Chinese population by electoral and registration districts and shows that 770 of the colony's 884 Chinese were living in the Portland and Ringarooma Registration Districts with 40 in Lefroy, 15 in Georgetown, 3 in Beaconsfield and 27 in Launceston. The total number of people employed in the North

East tin fields was 1,742 with another 1,845 employed in the gold fields. Assuming the Chinese living in the Lefroy, Launceston, Georgetown and Beaconsfield areas were working on the gold fields or as market gardeners and merchants (number = 85), Chinese tin miners made up almost half of the total tin mining population. This is likely to be a minimum estimate as the Government Statistician warns that the weakest link in census taking is the poorly educated householder who, being unable to read and write, or through lack of interest and carelessness, fails to comprehend what is required of them. ⁴⁹

Whilst a relatively benign attitude towards the Chinese had been expressed by town folk (who had little contact with the new immigrants) and mine managers, the importation of Chinese to the tin fields was not without incidence. There are several reports of Chinese being harassed and ill-treated in the early days and the most vicious of these occurrences were bound to happen in the mining communities where the Chinese were most numerous and direct competition between Europeans and Chinese took place.

One such incident occurred at Branhholm in September 1877. A party of about 12 Chinese arrived on foot from Bridport to work a claim at Pearce's Ruby Flat. This claim was already producing a good quantity of tin but falling prices of tin encouraged the mine manager to seek a change from waged employees to the tribute system. On arriving at Branhholm, approximately 2 miles from the claim, they were stopped by a group of angry European miners who refused to let them pass. The party returned to Scottsdale and sought police protection to enable their safe passage to the mine. ⁵⁰

The main objection to the Chinese in the mining areas was on economic grounds.

The Examiner's Branhholm correspondent, who had been relatively accepting of the Chinese on their arrival in the district in 1877, spoke of them differently in May 1880:

"...if Chinese competition be not restricted very soon, there will be but few Europeans left in our mining districts. At present there is around the district ten Chinamen to one European, and more arriving every day. It is impossible for us to compete with a race of people who can live in a mining centre for 4 shillings or 5 shillings per week, provisions and clothing included, while Europeans cannot provide for themselves with less than 16-19 shillings per week and then live economically." ⁵¹

However, the Chinese were well established at Branhholm by this time, the majority working on Ruby Flats which was the location of one of the largest mines to be owned and operated by Chinese. The mine owner, W. Ah Hong Moy, was the leader of the Chinese in the area. In 1883 his mine on Ruby Flats employed approximately 50 men. ⁵² He had a store on Ruby Flats and later moved, with his Chinese wife and family, into Branhholm. The family occupied a large weatherboard home with a store and bootmakers shop attached (see site 12). The children attended the local school. The family integrated

well with the European community, adopting the Christian faith. Ah Moy also mined in partnership with a European, Mr. Tasman Kincade, in later years ⁵³ (see Appendix 3).

Most of the Chinese miners kept very much to themselves, living in isolated one room huts constructed from split pailings or bulls wool (stringy bark). Some lived in small encampments of 2-3 huts or larger 'long huts' built to house from 3-6 people. The huts were typically 10-12 feet by 6 feet with wooden or dirt floors and wooden chimneys. Some of the Chinese huts had no chimneys, using instead a split level roof construction which overlapped slightly to keep the rain out. The miners obtained their supplies from Ah Moy and rarely had contact with Europeans except on their festive days, particularly Chinese New Year.

There were also those who objected to the Chinese on racial and moral grounds. A letter to the editor of the Examiner in June 1880 expressed the most extreme of these views:

"The stamp of Chinamen who come to these colonies are not of the highest order, and on their arrival generally take on some European woman as a partner, and as no woman of any account will unite themselves to such degraded beings, they as a rule pick up with the very scum of the earth and settle down in some tin or gold mining district. The consequence is very easily foreseen. In years to come we shall have a little generation of vipers to deal with, whose amalgamation with the low Europeans will form the very essence of vice and crime, besides tarnishing the European blood with a tinge of orange, and importation of diseases unknown in the colonies at present." ⁵⁴

Gambling (which was the major recreational past-time of the Chinese) and opium smoking also attracted much disparaging comment. A party of Chinese arriving in Launceston on board the Mangana in 1880 were greeted by a crowd of hostile Europeans shouting abuse. ⁵⁵ Whilst this brought forth a number of letters to the newspaper decrying the larrikinism and un-British behaviour of the crowd and defending the Chinese, it is apparent that the Chinese presence had aroused considerable resentment.

The argument in defence of the Chinese was expressed well by William Ritchie, an influential west coast mine manager, (the Chinese never established any footing on the west coast due to organised union resistance). His letter to the Examiner is worth quoting at length:

"Sir - Now that the question of how we are likely to be affected by Chinese immigration is being much discussed, it may not be amiss to look around us for evidence of the influence which the considerable number of Chinese now living among us has had upon our material and moral well-being. The Chinese are most numerous in the eastern mining district, where it is

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probable that there are at least fifteen hundred. They are largely employed in working on tribute on poor tin claims which were not sufficiently remunerative to satisfy European miners, and there can be no doubt that they are doing well. The township of Moorina has, I am informed, far more Chinese than European inhabitants and it is a quiet, well conducted place, presenting a great contrast to its state of lawless rowdyism a few years since, when, before the advent of the Chinese, neither life nor limb was safe. I have spoken to several mining managers who have employed Chinese miners and their general testimony is highly favourable. They say that the Chinese are steady reliable workers; that they are intelligent and make good tin dressers, and although not as a rule of such powerful physique as European miners, quite make up for this by working longer hours. They are also described as being very respectful and obliging and grateful for any small favours. They give very little trouble to the police, and in this respect, it cannot be said that they contrast unfavourably with miners of other nationalities. I am not aware that any serious criminal charges have been brought home to any Chinese in the district, or that it has been proved that they are addicted to the immoralities vaguely alleged against them. I have not heard of anyone who has admitted that the purity of his morals has been impaired by his being brought into contact with the Chinese. So far as I can discover, after making many enquiries, the Chinese are doing us no harm, but, on the contrary, it seems clear that they are doing the colony a large amount of good. They are considerable taxpayers as consumers of dutiable articles and it is quite a fair assumption that each Chinaman is worth from £2.10 - to £3.00 per annum to the revenue. The average Chinaman is fond of good living and when he can afford it he denies himself no reasonable luxury. He is more economical and from his greater skill in cookery can turn his food to better account than the general run of European miners. It is often said that Chinamen live upon three or four shillings a week, but from what I can learn, their expenditure is not much below that of Europeans while they get much better value for it. The presence among us of some thousands of industrious quiet men, who cause no special expenditure on their account, is not only a great gain to the revenue, but to those who are engaged in agriculture and other industries. It is admitted that we want population, in other words, that we want a home market. We can scarcely think of competing with the neighbouring colonies in the production of cereals, and more particularly at the present low prices, but if our mining population instead of only numbering a few thousands at the present, equalled - as it well might - that employed in agriculture, those engaged in the latter industry would soon enjoy quite as great an amount of prosperity as those who are engaged in mining.

Those who have observed what mining has done for the agriculturalists within the influence of the Mt. Bischoff mines, must be convinced that it would be of immense benefit to the colony if we had ten thousand Chinese in steady remunerative employment upon our various mining fields." ⁵⁶

No doubt Mr. Ritchie's balanced and practical defence of the Chinese was coloured by his own interests as a mine manager. But, this attitude was in fact the one which prevailed when, in 1881, an attempt was made to introduce an Act in the Tasmanian Parliament to restrict the entry of Chinese to the Colony. The interests of mine managers and the business community in the North East were closely tied up with the Chinese and the majority of Tasmanians were unaffected by them. Hence Tasmania withstood pressure to conform to the actions of the mainland states and rejected the Bill arguing that restrictions were unnecessary until some rational proof was presented, ⁵⁷ that the Chinese were injuring the Tasmanian population.

The years 1883-85 saw a partial depression in the North East. The most accessible tin deposits had now been worked out and many gold mines were deserted. The European population had greatly diminished as a result. The Secretary of Mines, however, felt that this was more due to a lack of spirit than a lack of mineral wealth. He opined that the initial expectations of the gold miners had been too high and in his report for 1884, spoke favourably of the tin mining industry:

"The tin mining industry appears to be carried on with vigour, the total quantity of ore produced during the six months ended 30th June (1883) being 746 tons, valued at £38,700. Many of the claims in the District are held by co-operative parties, who are steadily prosecuting their work, attracting little or no public attention. A considerable number of Chinese are employed as tributors." ⁵⁸

This period of economic slump apparently affected European wage earners far more gravely than the Chinese, who were by now mainly employed on their own account. Thus, the arrival of 200 or more Chinese in 1885 sparked off a determined anti-Chinese immigration campaign championed by the Tasmanian Trades and Labour Council (T.T.L.C.). Protest meetings were organised against Chinese and other non-British immigrants and a number of resolutions calling for the adoption of a restrictionist policy were presented to the Tasmanian government. ⁵⁹

Despite the strong anti-Chinese feeling in sectors of the mining community an attempt to start an anti-Chinese movement in the North East met with very little support. Mark Ireland, mine manager and historian, was one of the main agitators in this failed movement which is described here in his own words:

"All this time the Chinese population was increasing and the European population decreasing. In '86 or '87 a public

meeting was held in Derby to see what could be done to stay the Chinese invasion, as it was called, and, strange to say, Derby was the only place on the coast not affected by the Chinese. That being so, perhaps, was the main reason of the meeting there. Interests were not bound up with the Chinese, like the other centres. I was appointed to lecture with G. Badenach on the question of what to do. We lectured at Bransholme, Moorina, Pioneer and Gladstone. We sent posters ahead to storekeepers and hotelkeepers, but not one poster was put up. When we arrived at these townships we found out what was the matter. The shopkeepers were supplying a good deal of stores to the Chinese, the hotels were supplying grog, and half the people were so mixed up in some way with ground and interests that we got no help. Many businessmen and mine managers gave liberally towards the fund, but with the strict injunction not to mention their names. All were willing to banish the Chinese in one act if it were possible, but as their interests were so mixed up with the Chinese, it was just as well to let well alone. In places we could not get a chairman." 60

Accompanying this rather lack-lustre campaign against the Chinese by North East miners was the new threat of Chinese capital entering the state. Queensland introduced a £3.0.0 licence on Chinese gold miners in 1886 and this began a fear amongst the moneyed people in Tasmania that Chinese capitalists, financiers and merchants would look to Tasmania as a new area for their enterprise. 61

It was also at this time that interest began in Australian Federation. Tasmania's embrace of Federation worked to break down the strong isolationist tendencies within the colony. This became a most important reason for Tasmania's eventual introduction of legislation restricting Chinese immigration in 1887.

After fiercely opposing the 'un-British' racism of the Victorian and New South Wales Governments' treatment of the Chinese for many years, the Tasmanian Government, on 7 November 1887 passed its own immigration restriction Bill. 62 The Victorian Law of 1887 was used as a blue-print but was modified to permit the unrestricted entry of Chinese wives of naturalised citizens. The Tasmanian Act specified that only one Chinese was allowed passage on a vessel to every 100 tons of ship's tonnage and a poll-tax of £10.0.0 was levied on the master of the vessel for every Chinese carried, with the exception of Chinese crew or the Chinese wives of settlers.

This Act was introduced with some reluctance and only after considerable debate. Pressure from the T.T.L.C. and a desire to co-operate with other colonies were the major factors which determined this change of position from 1881. The Attorney-General explained the 1887 Legislation as a moral and political obligation to "...co-operate in this matter with the Legislatures of the other Australian colonies in which such a necessity (to restrict Chinese immigration) had

arisen." ⁶³ This was to ensure that Tasmania was not used as a transit point for incoming Chinese to obtain naturalisation papers and thereby gain entry to the other colonies. The Tasmanian Premier, Mr. Phillip Oakley Fysh, pointed out that the Bill was purely 'a matter of social convenience' ⁶⁴ and stated that the Chinese must be regarded as a 'law-abiding, industrious class, whose presence would not only be tolerated, but courted were it not that they are regarded by our labouring classes as undesirable competitors in the struggle for existence.' ⁶⁵

This basically liberal attitude to the Chinese was confirmed by Tasmania's action at the Inter-Colonial Conference on the Chinese Question held in Sydney, June 1888. Tasmania was the only colony to dissent from the decision of the Conference 'That further restriction of Chinese immigration is essential to the welfare of the people of Australasia.' A detailed discussion of the debate and circumstances surrounding the calling of the Conference is presented in P. Sidebottom's B.A. (Hons.) thesis, "Racism of the Righteous". ⁶⁶ Premier Fysh's reasons for dissenting were presented in a memorandum despatched with the Conference Resolutions to the British Government on 14 June, 1888. ⁶⁷

His main argument was that existing immigration restriction was sufficient and had succeeded in limiting the number of Chinese immigrants arriving in Australia. The Premier also defended the Chinese moral conduct and disagreed with the proposal that they were an alien race incapable of assimilation. In the case of Tasmania, the Premier considered the Chinese presence as more beneficial than not to the colony, and the economic competition argument as exaggerated given that the Chinese were usually engaged in occupations which Europeans found unsavoury and unremunerative. Above all the Premier considered the Conference Draft Bill failed to respect the rights of such naturalised British subjects who were at the time absent from the colonies but had wives, children, businesses and property in Australia and made no exception for Chinese born under English rule in Hong Kong. ⁶⁸

Letters to the Tasmanian papers following Tasmania's dissent from the Conference show a range of reactions to the Premier's stand. Some applauded his action as a true statesman and humanitarian; others regarded him as a betrayer of the working classes. Overall, however, the Premier received support and even in the North East, the Mercury's correspondent wrote that most people in the coastal mining districts condemned the harsh restrictions proposed by the Conference and were willing to admit the benefits of a small number of Chinese labourers. The main objection to the Chinese was based on a fear of a 'Chinese invasion' in large numbers using illegal methods of entry by ⁶⁹ transferring naturalisation papers and evading the poll tax. Restriction, not prohibition, was the theme of Tasmanian opinion.

The numbers of Chinese in Tasmania grew during the 1880s and probably peaked around 1886-87 before the introduction of the immigration restriction Act. Unfortunately there is no information available on the numbers in the colony at this time.

The best indicator of population available is perhaps the state of the tin mining industry. The value of tin exports

from the colony continued to rise from 1885 to 1887, comprising over 25% of Tasmania's total export earnings.

The number of persons employed in tin mining reached a peak of 2,262 in 1887⁷⁰ (following record prices in 1886). During 1887 exceptionally high returns were made in the tin mining industry, until prices plummeted to almost half overnight. In the absence of better data, it would seem reasonable to deduce that 1887 was probably the peak of the Chinese population in Tasmania.

By 1890 the number of persons employed in the tin fields had fallen to 1,592.⁷¹ The Secretary of Mines Report for 1890-91 stated that:

"... a considerable number of Chinese miners have left for China and Victoria having succeeded very well in the mines here, and have taken with them considerable sums of money."⁷²

2.5 CHANGING EMPHASIS ON THE TIN FIELDS (1890 s)

By the time the next census was carried out in 1891 the number of people working on the tin fields had fallen by 670 in three years.

The census of 1891⁷³ counted 931 Chinese males, 8 females, and 62 male and 55 female half Chinese. For the first time statistics on the Chinese are presented in detail, giving population distribution by electoral districts, occupation, education, age and conjugal condition (see Appendix 1).

The total increase in Chinese population over the previous decade was only 47 but the distribution of population had changed markedly. Most of the Chinese continued to live in the North Eastern division (845 males and 7 females) but the vast majority (580) now lived in Ringarooma electoral district with only 184 in Fingal. In 1881 474 Chinese lived in the district of Portland in the Fingal electorate and 296 lived in Ringarooma electorate.

Other major centres of Chinese population in 1891 were Hobart (37) in the south, and Emu Bay (19) and Mersey (15) in the North Western division. The total population of the North East was 43,889; although the Chinese were a small minority they accounted for almost 20% of the male population in the Ringarooma municipal district and over 10% in the Portland municipality.

The shift in population implies a change in the main Chinese population centres in the North East. The main Chinese was located at Weldborough (district of Portland, Fingal electorate) on the Western outskirts of the township. Weldborough was the home of the Maa Mon Chinn family, one of only 2 fully Chinese families in the area at the time (the other being the Ah Moy family at Branhholm). The Weldborough Joss House was the site of regular Chinese gatherings. At Chinese New Year and on other festive occasions, Chinese flocked to Weldborough from the surrounding districts. An unusual example of such an occasion occurred on 22 and 24 May, 1893 when a Chinese opera company performed in a large tent at the Chinese village.⁷⁴

Barbara Eastaerl points out a strange anomaly in the 1891 census which records the population of Weldborough as 165, with women making up half the population (81). Weldborough was thought to be almost entirely Chinese by this time.⁷⁵ There were only 2 Chinese women at Weldborough (Maa Mon Chinn's wife and her maid). Whilst there were some European women living in the camp it is unlikely that there were very many of them as the number of half-Chinese children in the district was only 24.

It is possible that the census counted only those Chinese resident in the main camp, i.e. the shop owners and vendors, and missed the Chinese miners who may have been working an area a little distant from the village at that time.

It is however, more likely, given the census figures, that Weldborough Chinese camp was no longer very populous, acting mainly as a service centre for a large floating population of miners working in the area from Emu Flat, the Weld River and its tributaries to the Cascades. It was common for miners to build a small hut (approximately 6ft X 10ft) at the mine site and also share a hut in the village which they returned to quite regularly on weekends⁷⁶ for provisions and recreational activities such as gambling.

Garibaldi was the largest Chinese camp in the Ringarooma electorate with other major centres at Gladstone, Branhholm and Moorina.

The mining population was constantly on the move with make-shift huts thrown up wherever the ground looked promising. Thus mining centres fluctuated rapidly, often experiencing several cycles of boom and decline. The centres which survived these changes most readily were those located strategically on major transport routes or within an accessible walking distance of mining areas. It is therefore very difficult to determine the exact size and relative importance of each township at any time.

The fact that Weldborough had declined as the main centre of Chinese population (at least temporarily) by 1891, giving way to Garibaldi, is confirmed to some extent by Valuation Rolls for the period. Valuation Rolls list the number of occupied dwellings, name of occupant and owner. Unoccupied buildings are not recorded (for example, the Joss houses).

The Valuation Roll for Portland municipality in 1889 lists 30 occupied Chinese buildings at Weldborough, all on Crown land. These comprise 6 houses (4 with shops), 8 cottages, 8 huts, 1 boarding house, 1 blacksmith and 1 eating house. In the same year Garibaldi had only 12 cottages, 4 shops and 1 smithy.⁷⁷

Three years later, in 1891, the Valuation Roll lists 41 occupied buildings at Garibaldi; 35 cottages, 1 hut and 5 shops (including a barber's shop and a bootshop), all on Crown land.⁷⁸ By 1893 this had diminished to 29 dwellings; 23 cottages (1 owned by Maa Mon Chinn and 1 by Fanny Sing Why), 1 hut and 5 shops.⁷⁹

Weldborough, in 1893, had little more than half the number of dwellings occupied by Chinese⁸⁰ (16 plus 1 room), but 3 of

these are listed as houses. They clearly are more substantial buildings than the small semi-detached cottages and huts which predominated in Garibaldi. The township comprised 2 houses with stores, 2 houses, 5 cottages, 4 huts, 1 eating house and 1 room.

Declining rates of occupancy continued throughout the 1890 s. By 1902 Garibaldi had diminished to 11 cottages, 2 huts, 1 house and 4 shops (one with cottage attached)⁸²; whilst Weldborough had also shrunk to 2 houses with stores, 3 cottages, and 4 huts (all on Crown land).⁸³

It would appear from this that Garibaldi was more populous than Weldborough during most of the 1890 s and had nearly twice the population in 1891.

The fact that Weldborough was the ceremonial centre of the Chinese population and the home of Maa Mon Chinn (known as the head Chinaman) may have contributed to its continuing reputation as the largest Chinese settlement in the North East long after it had experienced a decline. Festivities were also held at Garibaldi during Chinese New Year complete with fireworks, music, dancing and feasting, as was also the custom at Branhholm and possibly other centres of Chinese population.⁸⁴

Oral sources tend to have far more concrete recall of the Garibaldi camp. One part-Chinese interviewee (aged 72) remembers at least 40 huts at Garibaldi in her early childhood.⁸⁵ She lived nearby Garibaldi, at the Argus mine, and remembers the camp very well. By the late 1910 s the camp was becoming derelict with many huts standing empty and only occasionally used by passing miners seeking new ground. The Garibaldi Joss house was pulled down in c.1926 and some of its contents passed to her family.

Garibaldi is described by several oral sources as having two streets lined with small semi-detached huts, and a Joss house.⁸⁶ The site is relatively undisturbed and appears much larger than the Weldborough site. Three ceremonial Chinese pig ovens are located on the site, whereas only one is reported to have existed at Weldborough. The cramped style of building and the size of the site would indicate many more huts than at Weldborough where most buildings were larger and wholly detached (see site plan, page 32). Weldborough was undoubtedly a more permanent and prosperous settlement and was located on the major East-West road from St. Helens (Georges Bay) to Scottsdale. It is also close to the major tin mining centres at the Cascades, Emu Flat and on the Weld River (see site description, Site No. 1).

The next census was conducted in 1901⁸⁷ and by that time the Chinese population had diminished to 506, (463 males, 2 females and 41 dependants) with 103 half-Chinese (see Appendix 2). Ringarooma was still the most populous electorate with 190 Chinese of whom 154 were tin miners, and 12 were market gardeners. These miners would have been distributed over a large area including Gladstone, South Mt. Cameron, Garibaldi, Moorina, the Cascades and Branhholm. Fingal electorate had 112 Chinese most of whom would have been mining around Weldborough or at Emu Flat. There were more Chinese living in the cities (48 in Launceston and 22 in Hobart) and more than half the population (146) were now engaged in market gardening.

The population of major towns in the North East (including Europeans) is shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3: Population of Major Towns in Northeast Tasmania including main occupation and number of dwellings, 1901.

Town	Total Pop.	Males	Females	Main Occupation	No. of Occupied Dwellings
Weldborough	283	194*	89	tin mining	80
Branxholm	174	77	68	tin mining	27
Gladstone	163	93	70	tin mining	42
Lefroy	709	345	364	gold mining	158
Lisle	119	65	54	gold mining	29
Mangana	243	121	122	gold mining	50
Mathinna	815	435	380	gold mining	169

* The disproportion of males in Weldborough is a good indication that the Chinese were again quite numerous in Weldborough at this time.

2.6 1900-1921, THE END OF AN ERA

The number of Chinese in Tasmania almost halved between 1891 (n=939) and 1901 (n=505) for a number of reasons. The new immigration law discouraged immigrants but would not have been sufficient on their own to prevent it. Probably more significant was the decline on the tin fields.

The price of tin, which had risen to \$320.00 in 1886, plummeted overnight to half price and continued to fall, bottoming out at \$120.00 in 1893⁸⁸. Those who could afford to leave got out while the going was good, leaving behind the aged, infirm, the unsuccessful or newcomers who had little choice but to continue to struggle to eke out an existence from scratching tin. Many of them were now quite old. In the census of 1891, 342 of the total 931 Chinese were between 45 and 65 years of age.

Also remaining in the colony were a small number of successful miners who had taken up businesses such as market gardening and storekeeping, choosing to make Tasmania their home.

The majority of the 505 Chinese in Tasmania in 1901 appear to have become almost permanent residents as by 1911⁸⁹ there were still 427 Chinese (400 males and 27 females) and 102 half-Chinese living in Tasmania. Clearly there were some new arrivals in this period but it is difficult to determine how many from census data.

The 1911 census lists the occupations of the Chinese and for the first time market gardeners equal miners. One hundred and thirty-two males and two females were engaged in agricultural pursuits and 131 males and 1 female, in mining. The other major occupations of Chinese at this time were merchants and storekeepers - 45, domestic servants - 34, seamen - 22, and 51 dependants.

A decade later in 1921 there were still 261 Chinese in Tasmania, 235 of whom were born in China. The distribution of population had changed dramatically by this time with only 39 males in the Ringarooma district (where Garibaldi is located)

and 11 in Portland (Weldborough's municipality). The population is far more dispersed and has shifted to the cities with 37 in Launceston, 54 in Hobart, 15 in Glenorchy and 42 in Devonport and Emu Bay municipalities. This distribution reflects a predominance of market gardeners and merchants. Professions which allowed 61% of the Chinese to be employed on their own account with only 32% working for wages or salaries. Most (149) of these Chinese had been resident in Tasmania for over 20 years. However, 5 of the 7 Chinese born women had arrived between 1901 and 1921.⁹⁰

Life was very hard for the remaining small time tin miners. The easily won alluvial tin had long since been worked out and the rich deep leads at Derby (the Briseis mine), Branxholm (the Arba mine) and the Blue Tier (the Anchor mine) were worked by large capital intensive operations, from which the Chinese were excluded. The price of tin remained depressed throughout the 1890 s, rising slowly from 1894 but not recovering until 1898 when the price leapt to \$230.⁹¹

The miners also struggled with erratic water supplies. Small mines (and sometimes large ones) had to virtually cease during summer. The larger companies began major operations to improve the water supply and small concerns often had to lease water rights from them.

A number of developments occurred during this time which improved mining conditions in the 1900 s. The railway from Scottsdale to Launceston was completed in 1889 extended to Branxholm in 1911, with the final extension to Herrick in 1919. A road from Lottah (in the Blue Tier) to Derby was built. This passed through Weldborough and Moorina connecting all the mining towns to the rail head at Scottsdale.⁹² This made the transportation of tin a great deal easier and was also very timely, as the port of Boobyalla was no longer serviceable due to excessive siltation caused by the direct discharge of mine tailings into water courses.⁹³ Technological improvements, such as the steam powered centrifugal pump, enhanced mining productivity.

Several small mines survived the depressed 1890 s to take advantage of these improvements. After the Anchor Mine ceased operations in the Blue Tier in 1913 the area continued to be worked until 1923 by small operations. The last two Chinese in the area are remembered by local residents. Ah Ling, a well dressed aloof man who lived in a small galvanised iron shed on the Tier until 1917 when he died in a mining accident. Billy Bow, (see photo p. 94) a well liked character who lived on the Tier, originally in a small 2 room pailing hut and later in an abandoned pailing house with an iron roof. Billy Bow worked alone on the Tier until he died in c.1942.⁹⁴

The Ruby Flats mine at Branxholm also continued to produce well, as did the Weld and Echo mines working the Weld/Frome Rivers near Moorina, and the Argus mine on the Wyniford River near Garibaldi.

The last Chinese at the Argus and Garibaldi are remembered well by older residents. Mr. Cecil Harper⁹⁵ (b.1905) delivered goods from his parents' shop in Pioneer to the Argus and Garibaldi camps, visiting them at least 100 times between c.1919-1925. He also carted tin for the Chinese from Garibaldi to the rail head at Herrick. He recalls

the Chinese as scrupulously honest people who earnt a meagre income from tin, going into debt in summer and getting in front in winter. As soon as the rains fell and tin was available the Chinese paid their debts to the Harper family.

Mr. Harper attended several New Year celebrations at Garibaldi. Chinese New Year was not only the main annual occasion for the Chinese in the district but also for the local Europeans. The fireworks display, which continued for 2 nights, was legendary (as was the display at Weldborough, Lefroy in the earlier days, and to a lesser extent, Branhholm). A large wooden box, 6 foot X 3 foot X 3 foot deep was raised by block and tackle on to the top of a gantry in front of the Joss house. Inside the box was an elaborate arrangement of fireworks with interconnecting fuses woven together on a large screen. Very elaborate Chinese dolls, about 2 foot long, were attached to the screen and would fall from the sky as the crackers went off. The display was started by lighting the screen in one corner and the fireworks would go off in a carefully determined sequence creating a marvellous spectacle. However, the Europeans began to disrupt these occasions by stealing the dolls and in the last year (1915-1917) a fence was placed around the fireworks display. Not to be deterred one European scaled the fence and was pursued by Chinese who knifed him in the arm. According to Mr. Harper, he ran for protection to the policeman on duty but received no sympathy.

These occasions were also marked by extravagant feasting, but this was limited to the Chinese and a few invited European guests. Large circular stone ovens (see plage 8, page 42) were used to cook whole pigs and poultry. Plenty of alcohol was consumed and gambling often continued all night.

Apart from these occasions the Chinese kept very much to themselves with very few exceptions. When they became too old to mine, many departed for Launceston in the hope of finding less strenuous work in the Chinese laundries, restaurants and shops. The last 3 Chinese at Garibaldi, Ah Woo, Ah Po and Ah Loy, were eventually awarded a charitable grant by the local council.⁹⁶

2.7 SUMMARY HISTORY OF CHINESE SITES:

The Chinese who came to Tasmania in the late 1870 s to 1890, were mainly sojourners. They stayed only long enough to accumulate sufficient money to return to China relatively wealthy men. For this reason they did not seek to integrate with their new environs or put down roots in this country. Coming from a situation of dire poverty in China, they placed themselves in debt to their employers, in order to obtain a passage to Australia. On arrival, they worked for other Chinese, or on tribute, very few working for a wage. They generally undercut European labour and quickly began to dominate the small-scale alluvial tin mining industry in Tasmania. A fall in tin prices in 1880 and the Lisle gold rush in 1879 caused many Europeans to leave the tin fields, temporarily. When they returned the industrious Chinese had scooped the pool.⁹⁷

Censuses of the period indicate that there were never more than 1,000 Chinese in Tasmania. However, this is probably misleading as the peak of the alluvial tin mining industry in North East Tasmania was 1886/1887, which was between the census of 1881 and 1891. Although the population of Chinese only increased from 884 in 1881 to 939 in 1891 this does not necessarily reflect a stable and very gradual increase of 55 over a whole decade. Rather, the mining population was constantly mobile and Chinese were arriving and departing in large numbers during the intervening period. It is reasonable to assume that the peak of the Chinese population coincided with the peak of the tin mining industry in 1887. This is also the year that restrictive immigration laws were introduced in Tasmania. Between 1887 and 1890 the number of persons employed in the tin fields had fallen by 670. The census of the following year counted 939 Chinese in Tasmania

From 1887 the population gradually declined with departures to China now well in excess of arrivals. Old age was also having a marked affect, as many of the last Chinese in the North East were ageing miners, too old or infirm to turn their labour to sufficient profit to enable their return to China.

The Chinese who stayed in Tasmania established themselves as market gardeners or merchants. The population moved from the tin fields to the outskirts of townships and the rich agricultural areas. By 1921, Hobart had become the largest centre of the Chinese who set up market gardens in the rich Derwent River flats in Glenorchy and Moonah.

The nature of the archaeological record left by the Chinese is likely to reveal this impermanence. The obvious aspects are the temporary and vanishing nature of the dwellings and villages erected by Chinese miners. European miners were also inclined to be a shifting population. The difference between the structures built by Europeans and those built by Chinese may not be great when it comes to the isolated miner's hut. However, the nature of the townships that grew up to service the mining population is probably very different. Did the Chinese observe their rules and customs regarding the design and orientation of dwellings, streets and Joss houses; or were these simply temporary shelters thrown up in the style of the European buildings there about? Whether the Chinese villages really were 'a little bit of China transplanted'⁹⁸ remains to be seen.

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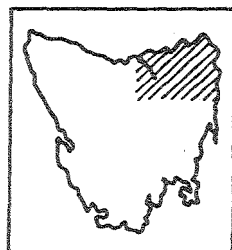
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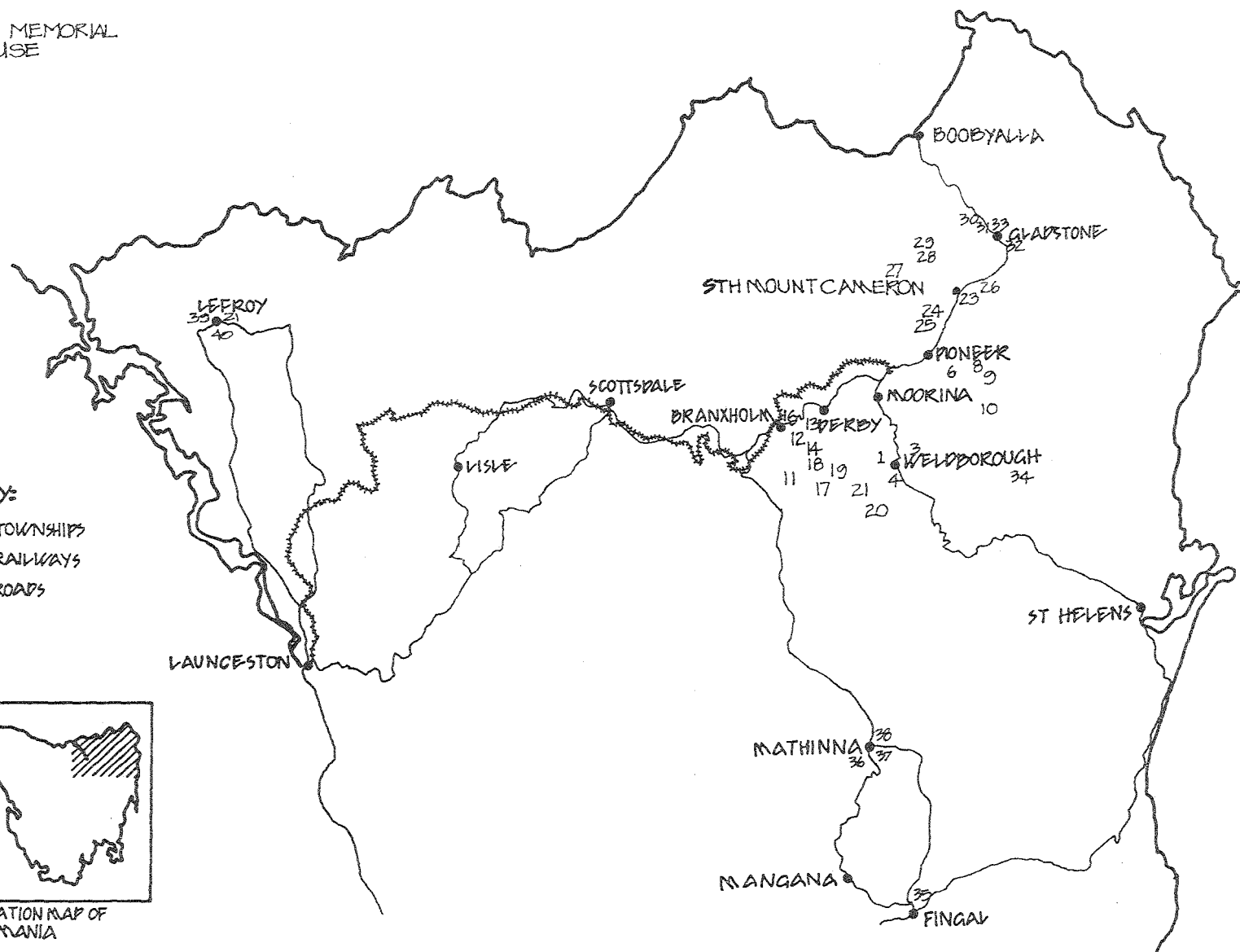
- 1&2 WELDBOROUGH CHINESE CAMP & JOSS HOUSE
- 3 EMU FLAT
- 4&5 WELDBOROUGH CEMETERY & MEMORIAL
- 6&7 GARIBALDI CAMP & JOSS HOUSE
- 8 AH GAR'S
- 9 THE ARQUIS
- 10 THREE NOTCH TRACK
- 11 RUBY FLAT
- 12 AH MOY'S HOUSE
- 13 AH DOO'S HUT
- 14 BRANXHOLM JOSS HOUSE
- 15 AH YEW'S CAMP
- 16 BRANXHOLM CEMETERY
- 17 TIN POT CREEK
- 18 GOLD CREEK
- 19 CASCADE RIVER
- 20 GRASS PADDOCKS
- 21 AH CHOON'S STORE
- 22 MOORINACEMETERY
- 23 SOUTH MOUNT CAMERON
- 24 RUBY CREEK CAMP 1
- 25 RUBY CREEK CAMP 2
- 26 LONG GEE'S CAMP
- 27 BLUE LAKE
- 28 CLIFTON CAMP 1
- 29 CLIFTON CAMP 2
- 30 AH COW'S OVEN
- 31 AH COW'S GARDEN
- 32 LEE FOOK'S HOUSE
- 33 GLADSTONE CEMETERY
- 34 BLUE TIER
- 35 AH FOO'S HOUSE FINGAL
- 36 AH FOO'S HOUSE MATHINNA
- 37 WONG HEE'S SHOP
- 38 CHINESE MARKET GARDEN
- 39 LEFROY CHINESE CAMP
- 40 LEFROY JOSS HOUSE
- 41 LEFROY CEMETERY

KEY:

- TOWNSHIPS
- RAILWAYS
- ROADS



LOCATION MAP OF
TASMANIA



MAP 2: Map of Study Area Showing Location of Sites. Site Numbers Correspond to The Site Record.

SITE 1: WELDBOROUGH CHINESE CAMP

HISTORY: Chinese tin miners first came to Weldborough c.1875-1880 and the last Chinaman (Hee Jarm) left the Weldborough village c.1934. This was the largest and most stable Chinese town in the North East, acting as a centre for Chinese throughout the area. At Chinese New Year Weldborough attracted Chinese from all over the North East for days of feasting and fireworks, and in 1893 a Chinese opera company performed in the township. By 1907 land within the encampment was predominantly owned by Chinese (land holdings valued from £4.00 to £170.00) with Maa Mon Chin the major land owner. Maa Mon Chin and his Chinese wife were referred to as the unofficial heads of the Chinese community in the North East.

SIGNIFICANCE: This site is of the highest significance as it was the largest and most stable Chinese town, and was the religious and cultural centre of Chinese settlement in the North East. The site is well preserved and two houses remain from c.1900.

SUB SITES: See site 2, Weldborough Joss House.

LOCATION: Ringarooma 5643, G.R. 757396.

MUNICIPALITY: Portland 58, WARD: North.

ACCESS: On the Tasman Highway on the western outskirts of the township of Weldborough, 0.25km west of Gardners Creek in a field on the southern side of the highway in which the first house of the town is located.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 1 - Chinese camp/township. Domestic, commercial and religious site.

DIMENSIONS: 1.2-1.5ha.

LAND TENURE: Privately owned by R. Chintock, Tasman Highway, Weldborough.

ENVIRONMENT: Situated on the Western access route to the town in a fenced field bounded by Gardners Creek on the west and the Tasman Highway on the east. The field has a WNW aspect and is a developed pasture.

RELICS: Two buildings (wooden houses) are the only remaining structures on the site of the original Chinese settlement. These are at least 80 years old and belong to the Chintock family who are still resident on the site. The houses are built in the vernacular style of the time, small 4 room weather-boards with an iron roof, a narrow verandah on the front and some enclosed additions on the back. Depressions of the old roads and some buildings are still evident despite cultivation of the ground for pasture. Religious and ceremonial objects, originally housed in the Joss House which once stood on the site, are now housed in the Queen Victoria Museum in Launceston. Many bottles and earthenware jars have been collected from the site.

PRESERVATION: Despite cultivation of the site and mining of the site of 1 row of buildings most of the area is still intact. Two houses remain in good condition from c.1900 and the depressions of roads and buildings are clearly visible. The oldest house appears dry and sound although in a delapidated condition, the other is well maintained by its current occupants. Bottle collectors have retrieved the bulk of accessible pottery and glass relics. There is no threat to the preservation of the site other than the continued disintegration of the uninhabited house due to weathering. The land and the gully is stable.

SOURCES: Oral - R. Chintock, B. Butt, F. Chinn, F. Grose.
Documentary - Weldborough Town Plan No.2, W/13A. 1910; Lands Department Survey book H10, 1907, p28; Lands Department Survey book, G10, 1904, p28; Lands Department Survey book G7, 1904, p21; Lands Department Survey book L7, 1914, p23; Lands Department, Hobart.

RECORD: Planimetric sketch, photographs, oral histories.

Key to numbers

- 1 Existing weatherboard cottage and garden belonging to R. Chintock
- 2 Flat depression marking Joss House site
- 3 Telegraph pole
- 4 Flat depression marking Ah Lyn's shop and residence
- 5 Scatter of relics marking site of San Kit's shop
- 6 Existing wooden shed
- 7 Existing weatherboard house belonging to R. Chintock
- 8 Tank stand
- 9 Mined gully filled with blackberries, dug since Chinese occupation removing the site of a row of Chinese shops, including Maa Mon Chin's store
- 10 Site of Maa Mon Chin's house
- 11 Existing shed
- 12 Existing house
- 13 Existing house belonging to Mr W. Butt
- 14 Depression of two old roads

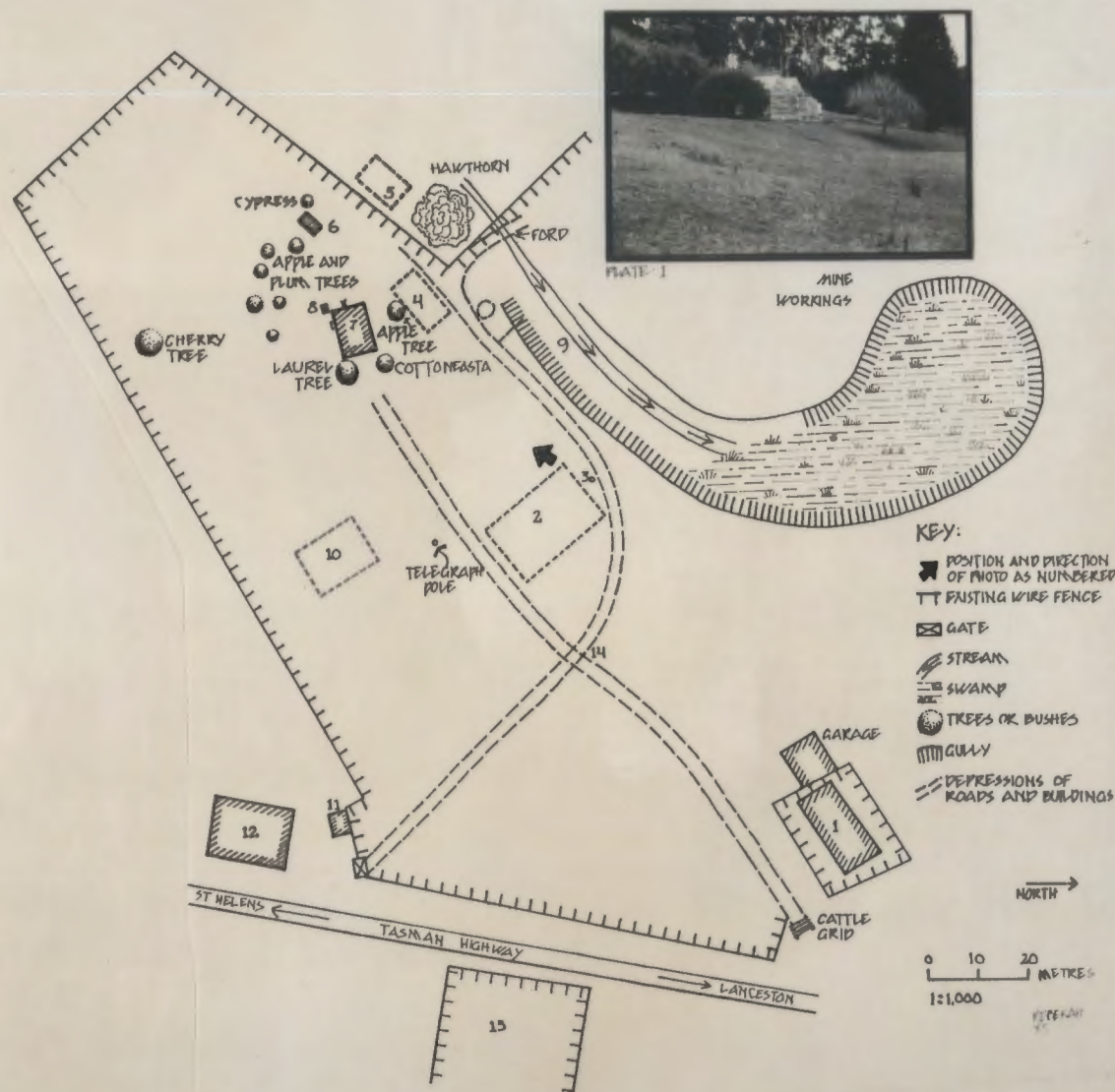


Figure 1: Planimetric sketch of Weldborough Chinese camp, 1983. (site 1) grid reference 757396

Plate 1: Photo of existing weatherboard house on Weldborough Chinese Camp Site.

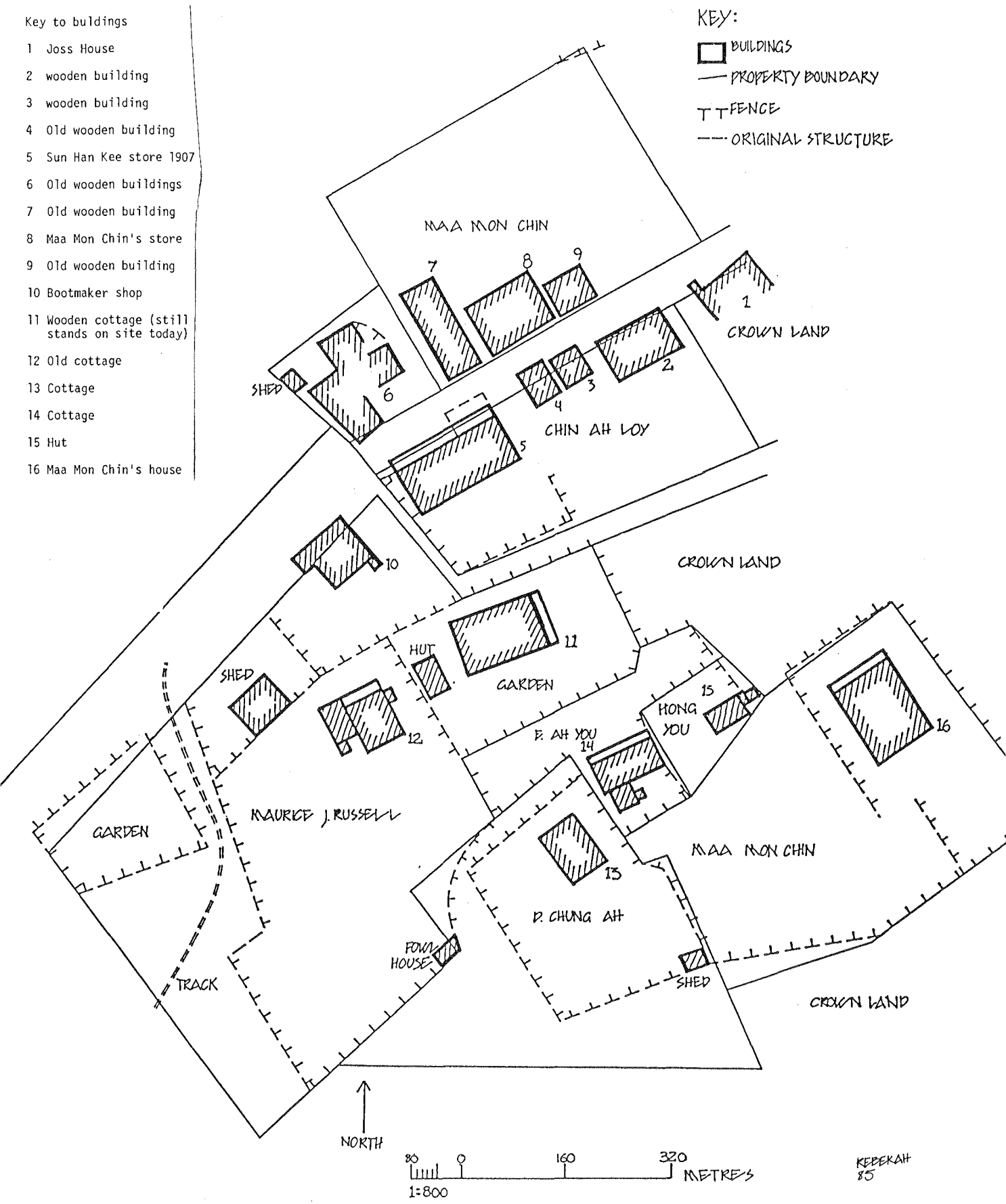


Figure 2: Reconstruction of layout of Weldborough camp in c. 1904, drawn from Lands Department records. The buildings noted as 'old' in the 1904 survey records may have been unoccupied, this would tally better with valuation rolls for this period. The row of buildings marked 6-9 is now the site of the mined gully filled with blackberreis, as shown in figure 1.

SITE 2: WELDBOROUGH JOSS HOUSE

HISTORY: Erected in c.1880 when Weldborough was the main regional centre serving a population of 500-1000 Chinese. The Chinese population diminished on the tinfields c.1910-1920 due to a decline in tin mining, restrictive immigration and old age and by c.1930 only one full Chinese, Hee Jarm, remained at Weldborough. He became the caretaker of the Joss House and fearing for its safety appealed to Mr J. Chung Gon of Launceston for assistance. Between them and with cooperation of the Launceston City Council in 1934 the contents of the Joss House were transported to the Launceston Museum where it continued to function as a place of worship as well as a museum exhibit.

SIGNIFICANCE: The Joss House is a place of worship which was integral to the Chinese way of life in Tasmania. There were at least five Joss Houses in the North East but the one at Weldborough was the longest lived. The contents of the Joss House are held in the Queen Victoria Museum but no record of the building survived. A sketch of the Joss House has been drawn from descriptions and dimensions given by first-hand oral sources. This site is significant as it was the most important Joss House in the North East and for its relationship with the collection in the Queen Victoria Museum.

SUB SITES: See site 1, Weldborough Chinese Camp.

LOCATION: Ringarooma 5643, G.R. 757396.

MUNICIPALITY: Portland 58, North.

ACCESS: Located at the entrance to the camp (see Fig. 1) between the 2 streets of the settlement. Access currently through private gate which runs direct to Joss House site on the southern sides of the intersection of 2 old roads.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 2 - Joss House, religious site.

DIMENSIONS: 15m x 18m, see diagram, (fig. 3).

LAND TENURE: Privately owned by R. Chintock, Weldborough. Contents in the Queen Victoria Museum in Launceston.

ENVIRONMENT: Located at the entrance to the Weldborough Chinese camp on the intersection of 2 streets, facing west. Although most of the camp was owned by Chinese by 1907, the Joss House was built on Crown Land.

RELICS: The building, which was weatherboard with a corrugated iron roof and a large open sided covered area in front of the entrance, was dismantled in c.1934. The contents reside in the Queen Victoria Museum in Launceston.

PRESERVATION: Contents preserved and restored by the Queen Victoria Museum in Launceston. Site of Joss House is marked by a large flat depression.

SOURCES: Oral - R. Chintock, F. Chinn, W. Butt.
Documentary - Lands Department Survey book No. H10, p28; and No. G7 p21, Lands Department, Hobart. Queen Victoria Museum (no date) The Joss House, (unpublished information pamphlet).

RECORD: Photographs, oral description, drawings.

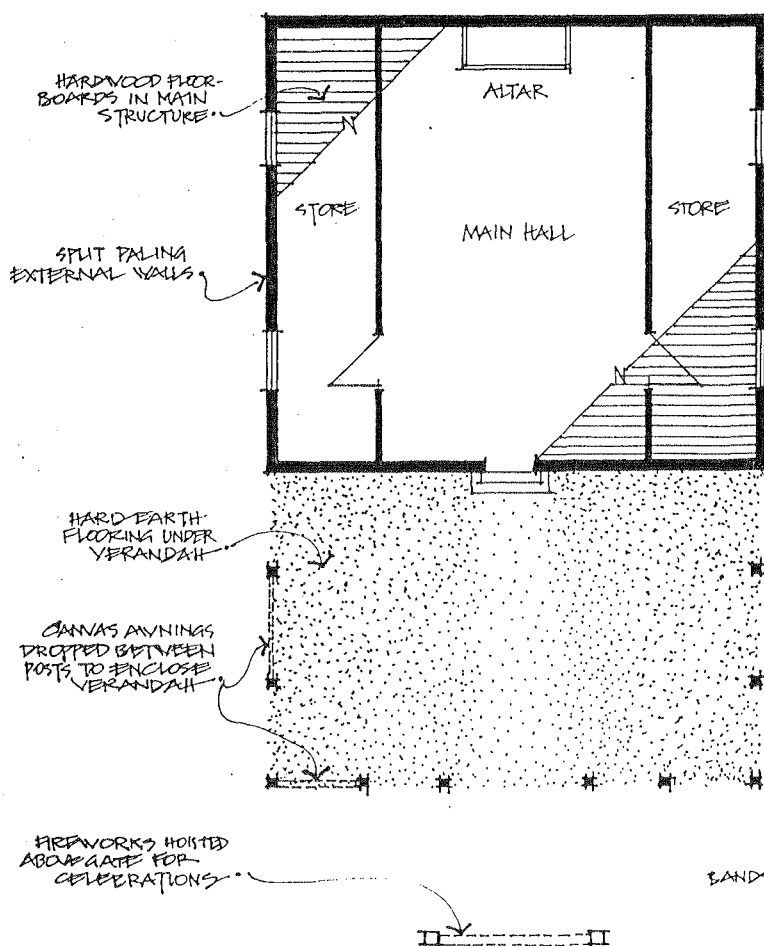
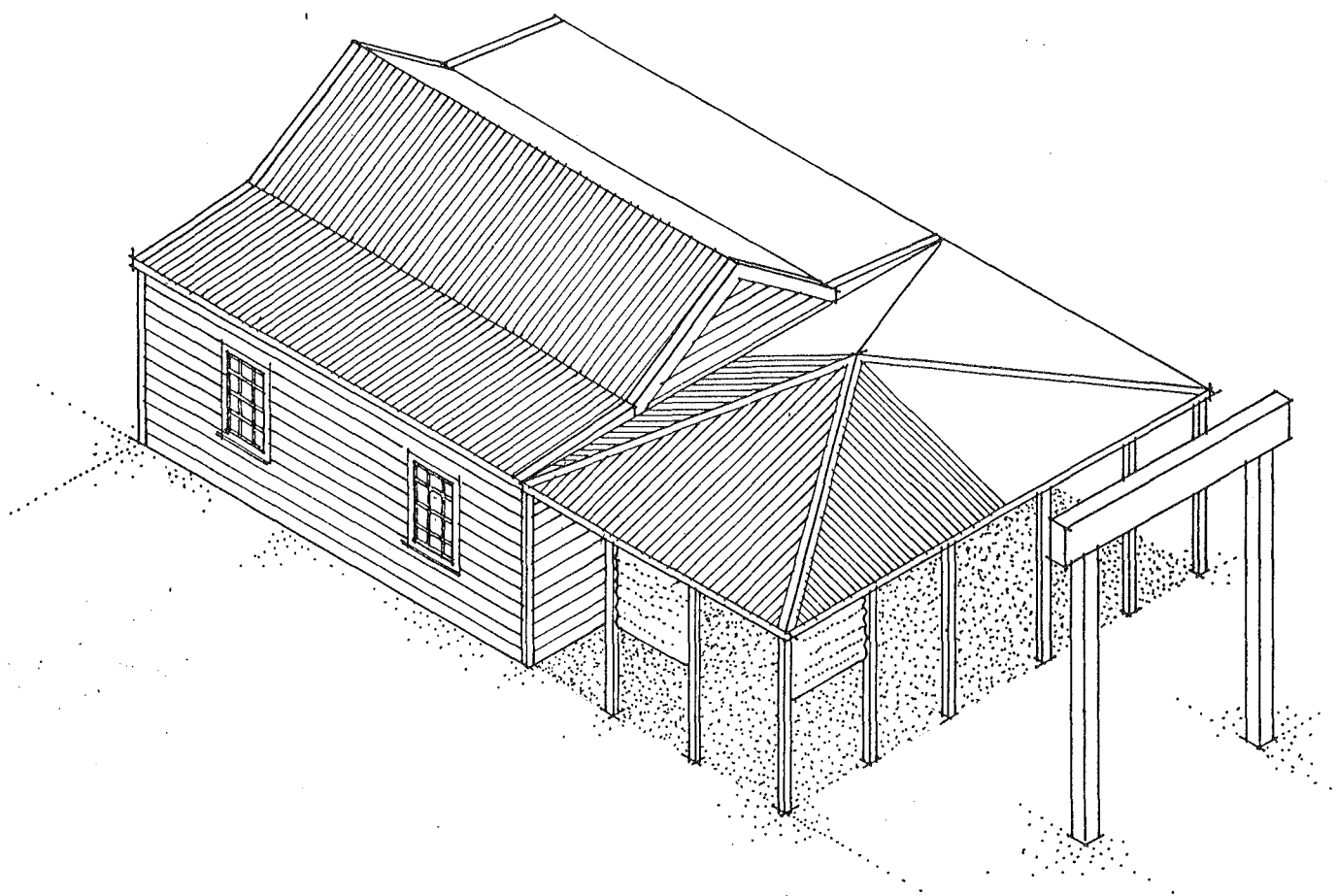


FIGURE 3.

DRAWING BASED ON
RECOLLECTIONS OF RON
CHINTOCK + BILL BUTT (1983)

WELDBOROUGH
JOSS HOUSE
SCALE 1:200



SANDSTAND



Woskey

SITE 3: EMU FLAT, WELDBOROUGH

HISTORY: Emu Flat was a major tin mining centre in the Weldborough area and was mined mainly by the Chinese in the early days c.1880. The Weldborough camp served as the centre for Chinese miners on Emu Flat.

SIGNIFICANCE: Unfortunately the dwelling sites located were very heavily disturbed by recent mining and it was not possible to clearly distinguish hut locations.

SUB SITE:

LOCATION: Derby 5644, G.R. 792411.

MUNICIPALITY: Portland 58, WARD: North.

ACCESS: Emu Road runs through the site but is four wheel drive only and is often blocked by large fallen trees. Easily located on a map, the site is 800-900m past the T junction of Emu Road and Frome Road (on Emu Flat) and 20m beyond the Frome River ford. On the left hand side of the road a grassed clearing indicates the site and another area is located on the right hand road-side 20m further along.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 5 - Miner's dwelling.

DIMENSIONS: No definable site but area of relics spread over 20m x 15m.

LAND TENURE: Crown Land, State Forest.

ENVIRONMENT: Situated approximately 5km by road from Weldborough. Emu Flat has been extensively mined several times between 1880 and 1980-1981. Moss harvesting has also occurred in recent years. The site is almost 1km from Emu Flat located near the Frome River amongst disturbed regrowth forest, mainly Eucalypt and tea tree. Recently mined areas surround the site and have partially destroyed the east and southeast area in which a solid stone chimney structure is located. This area has been bulldozed and is covered in small white river stones.

RELICS: Fragments of Chinese pottery and distinctive Dutch Gin bottles were found concentrated in two small areas approximately 20m apart. In one of these areas, to the east of Emu Road, a solid chimney base survives in a thin wedge of ground which has been bulldozed on both sides. The structure resembles a severed pig oven more closely than the usual scatter of hearth stones found at other hut sites. However, local knowledge refutes the possibility of a pig oven at the site (Chintock, R. personal communication).

PRESERVATION: The site has been heavily disturbed and partially destroyed. The area remains under threat as mining may recur.

SOURCES: Oral - R. Chintock.

Documentary - Plan of Mineral Sections County of Dorset, Sheet No. 2, 210-a, 1889. Office of Mines, Hobart.

RECORD: Written observation.



Plate 2: Remains of stone chimney or pig oven on Emu Flat with fragment of Chinese rice bowl on left shoulder. Front of structure destroyed by bulldozer.

SITE 4: WELDBOROUGH CEMETERY

HISTORY: Ancestor worship was an important feature of Chinese culture and Confucian religion, being a mechanism of clan ownership of land and permeating the social structure and ideology of ancient China. Most of the Chinese in northeast Tasmania carried on their customs and buried their dead in the traditional manner making only the adjustments required of them by the laws of the land. Whenever possible the bones of the deceased were exhumed and sent back to China to reside in the ancestral burial grounds. It was common practice for those who could afford the journey to return to China to die.

SIGNIFICANCE: The cemetery contains a memorial erected by the local Chinese community to their dead and a number of Chinese graves. Only one grave bears a headstone engraved with Chinese characters but it is very likely that there are many unmarked Chinese graves in the cemetery. The cemetery at Moorina contains a similar memorial but no marked Chinese graves. The site is significant as a cultural monument and as one of only two surviving memorials to the Chinese.

SUB SITE: Site 5, Chinese memorial.

LOCATION: Ringarooma 5643, G.R. 756386.

MUNICIPALITY: Portland 58, WARD: North.

ACCESS: The dirt road to the cemetery turns right off the Tasman Highway 300m east of the Weldborough Hotel (the last building of the township).

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 8 - Cemetery and memorial.

DIMENSIONS: The cemetery is approximately 75m x 75m.

LAND TENURE: Cemetery reserve.

ENVIRONMENT: The site has a northerly aspect and is situated amongst pastures near the top of a large hill overlooking the wooded valley of the Weld River. The township of Weldborough, lying less than half a kilometre to the west, is obscured from view by surrounding hills.

RELICS: The principle components of the site are the memorial (see site 5), the grave of Gee Kitt Tung and a group of graves belonging to the Chintock family, who were amongst the earliest Chinese settlers in the area and whose descendants still reside in Weldborough.

PRESERVATION: The memorial and grave of Kitt Tung are weathering quite badly but remain mostly intact. It is rumoured that Chinese gravestones have become collectors items and although it seems unlikely that the grave or memorial would be vandalised in such a way the possibility is disturbing.

SOURCES: Oral - F. Chinn, B. Butt, F. Grose (taped interviews).

RECORD: Photographs, written observation, oral history.



Plate 3: Chinese memorial, Welborough Cemetery, viewed from the west: showing entrance, front of memorial stone and side of ceremonial oven used for burning papers.



Plate 4: Chinese memorial, Welborough Cemetery, viewed from the south: showing side view of headstone and front of oven.

SITE 5: WELDBOROUGH CHINESE MEMORIAL

HISTORY: Erected as a place of worship of the Confucian religion by the Chinese community of Weldborough. The Tasmanian Chinese buried their dead in traditional manner leaving offerings of food and burning ceremonial papers on the grave. Each year a festival of the dead was held (Chung Yeung) to honour the departed Chinese. The role of the memorial in the burial and Chung Yeung rituals is not known but the oven is said to have been used for preparing food and burning papers, as the traditional ritual of burning papers on the graves was deemed to be a fire hazard by Tasmanian authorities.

SIGNIFICANCE: Only two monuments (and very few graves) to the departed Chinese survive in the North East. This site is highly significant as a rare structural artifact from the Chinese era.

SUB SITE: See sites 1, 2, and 4.

LOCATION: Ringarooma 5643, G.R. 756386.

MUNICIPALITY: Portland 58, WARD: North.

ACCESS: See site 4, located in the NW of the cemetery.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 8 - Religious, memorial.

DIMENSIONS: Total 2.6m x 2.6m, Headstone 59cm x 75cm x 5cm thick. Oven 90cm x 90cm x 120cm high. Block beneath headstone 1m x 1m high.

LAND TENURE: Cemetery reserve.

ENVIRONMENT: Located in NW quarter of cemetery well away from European graves. Gee Kitt Tung's grave is 8m behind the memorial, and surrounding area is empty. Memorial and grave face East-North-East 55°.

RELICS: Comprising an oven and memorial stone mounted on a concrete slab enclosed by a bent wire fence. The memorial headstone bears the following inscription in English "This stone has been erected by the Chinese as a place of worship of Confusias religion to the departed Chinese and those connected with the Chinese in the Weldborough Cemetery".

PRESERVATION: The iron fence is broken in places and bent and the gate is missing its latch. The cement floor is cracked and weeds are growing through. Cement render on the oven and memorial stand is flaking off and bricks beneath are crumbling. Several of the Chinese characters are cracked and partially missing.

SOURCES: Oral - F. Grose, B. Butt (taped interviews).

RECORD: Written observation, photographs.



Plate 5: Close-up of headstone on Chinese memorial in Weldborough Cemetery.

SITE 6: GARIBALDI

HISTORY: Valuation Rolls show that in 1888 there were 10 houses, 1 bootshop and 1 barber in Garibaldi. By 1891 there were 35 cottages, 1 hut and 5 shops, all on crown land, but by 1893 the population had declined to 22 cottages and 5 shops, two of which were privately owned (one by Maa Mon Chin of Weldborough, and one by Fanny Sing Why of Garibaldi).

SIGNIFICANCE: This site is of primary significance as it was one of the largest Chinese camps in the North East, with the constantly fluctuating numbers on the tin fields it may at times have rivalled Weldborough in population size but was less permanent. Despite extensive damage by fossickers there are many areas of the site which are well preserved. The site has as much potential for detailed archaeological study, or development as a historic site, as Weldborough.

SUB SITES:

LOCATION: Derby 5644, G.R. 798494.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Gladstone.

ACCESS: Car access on Garibaldi Road. From Gladstone Road/Tebrakunna Road to the Garibaldi Road turn off is 3.5km. Continue 1.8km to the site, marked by small layby and track.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 1 - Chinese camp. Domestic, commercial, industrial and religious site.

DIMENSIONS: Clearing approximately 100m x 125m total area including clearing approximately 1.8ha.

LAND TENURE: Crown land administered by the Department of Mines. In February 1984 the site was proposed for classification as a State Reserve.

ENVIRONMENT: The site comprises a large clearing on the north to northeast facing slope of a moderately steep hill. The clearing is very open with a thin layer of mosses and grasses over exposed quartz gravel. Occasional tea tree, Acacias, Casuarinas, and small Eucalypts are scattered mainly about the edges of the site. The eastern side of the site is a mined gully approximately 6-12m deep. The clearing is surrounded by frequently burnt, wet sclerophyll forest with the vegetation adjacent to the site dominated by thickets of Casuarina. Located on the former main route between Pioneer and Moorina and a track to the Blue Tier.

RELICS: No visible ruins or existing buildings. Three large cylindrical stone and earth ovens used for roasting whole pigs are the only remaining structures. Depressions are visible of a road, rows of buildings, the furrows of a garden and water courses. Shards of pottery, glass fragments, rusted water pipes and tools are scattered profusely around the site.

PRESERVATION: The site has been heavily fossicked for decades and recently a tractor and plough, and a bulldozer, have been used to unearth bottles. This activity is likely to continue and poses a serious threat to the preservation of the site.

SOURCES: Oral - B. Shean, D. Homan, C. Harper, C. Taylor.

Documentary - The Hobart Gazette (Valuation Rolls, Ringarooma), 1888 Vol 2, 1891 Vol 2, 1893 Vol 2, 1894 Vol 2. The Hobart Gazette, Vol 1, 1902, (Ringarooma Road Trust).

RECORD: Site plan, photographs, oral histories, old photos (two).

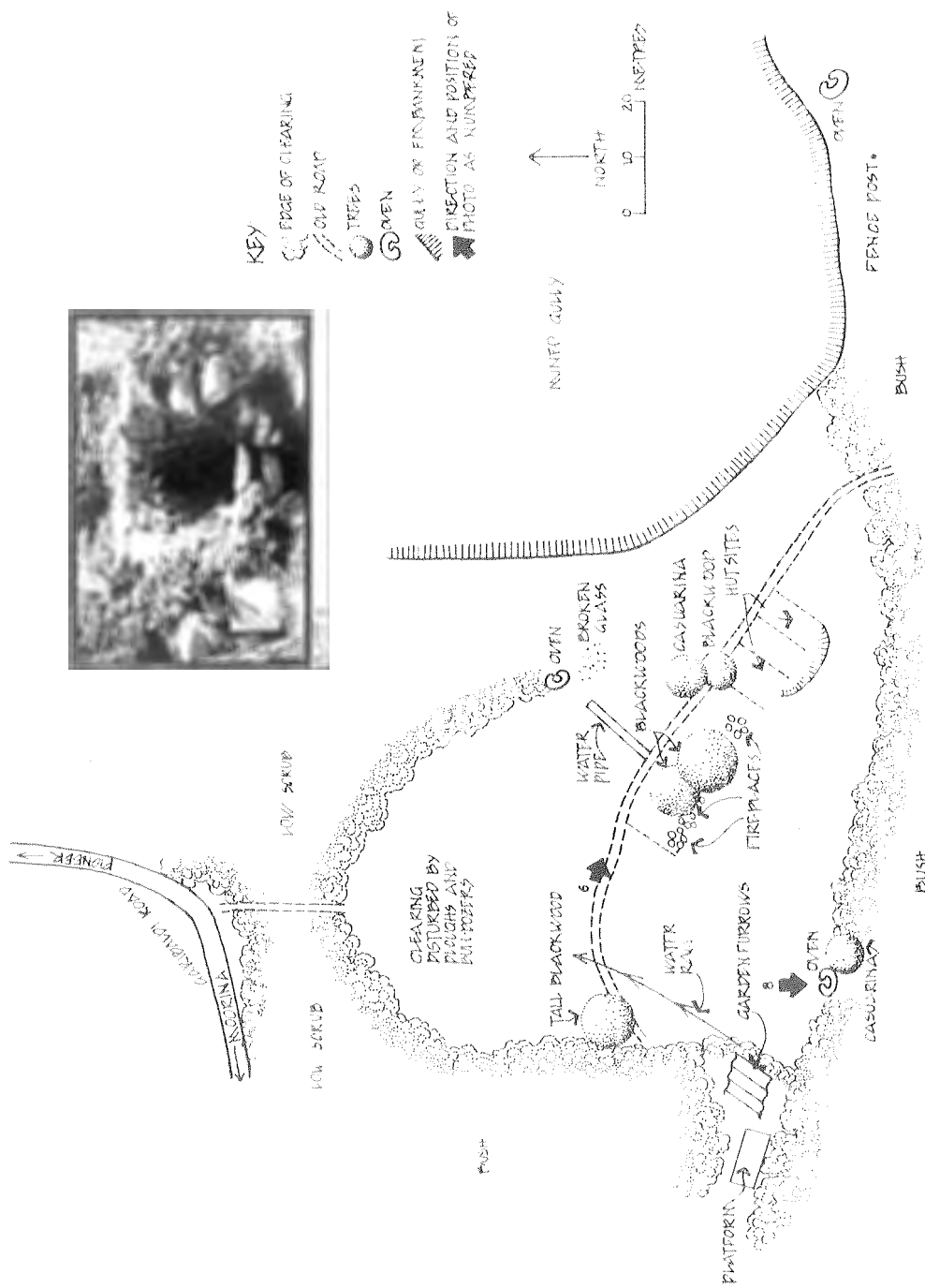




Plate 6: Garibaldi main street in 1983 viewed from approximately the same position as Plate 7.



Plate 7: The main street of Garibaldi c.1908 looking south-east. Photo supplied by Mr P.Burns, St Helens Local History Room.

SITE 7: GARIBALDI JOSS HOUSE

HISTORY: Garibaldi was the second largest Chinese village in the North East, and with a constantly floating population following the tin, it may at times have been larger than Weldborough. The Chinese New Year celebration took place over a 2 week period with a week of celebrating at Weldborough followed by 2 days break and then 3-4 days of celebrations at Garibaldi. The date of erection of the building is not known but it was dismantled c.1926. The contents may have been taken to Weldborough and thence to the Launceston museum but some things, at least, were dispersed with the departing Chinese. It was believed to be a privately owned collection (D. Homan, personal communication).

SIGNIFICANCE: The Joss House was an important focus for the Chinese community. Apart from daily religious functions the Chinese New Year celebrations took place around the Joss House which served to guard the future prosperity of the miners against bad luck or evil spirits. Chinese and Europeans came from all over the North East to take part in the New Year celebrations. The site is relatively undisturbed.

SUB SITES: See site 5, Garibaldi.

LOCATION: Derby 5644, G.R. 798495.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Gladstone.

ACCESS: Car access on Garibaldi Road, 1.8km from Tebrakunna Road and 3.5km from Gladstone Road at Pioneer.

CLASIFICATION: Site type 2 - Joss House, religious site.

DIMENSIONS: Unknown. The main room was aproximately 3.5m x 6m. A small room behind the main room was inhabited by the caretaker.

LAND TENURE: Crown land, administered by the Department of Mines.

ENVIRONMENT: Located at the entrance to the camp from the Moorina to Pioneer Road.

RELICS: No remains were located. One photo survives which is almost certainly Garibaldi Joss House but may be Weldborough. This shows a crude split paling hut with narrow verandah, and wooden floor (see plate 9).

PRESERVATION: The Joss House site appears to have escaped bulldozing by bottle collectors and closer study might determine its precise location.

SOURCES: Oral - B. Shean, D. Homan, C. Harper, B. Pitchford (taped interviews).
Documentary - two photographs obtained from P. Burns, the St. Helens Local History Room.

RECORD: Planimetric sketch, photographs, four oral histories.

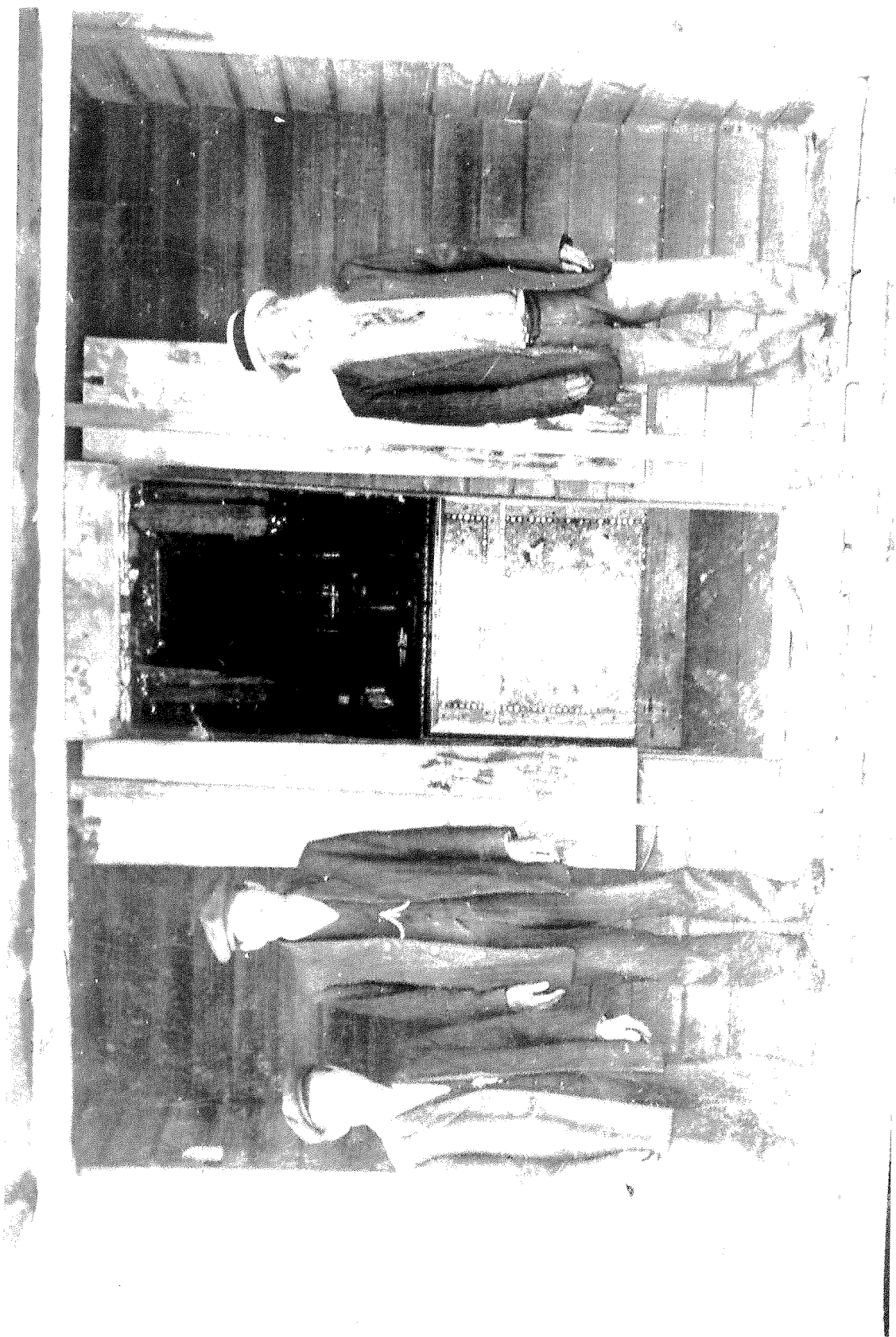


Plate 9: Photo of Garibaldi Joss House c.1918? with three Chinese standing on the verandah. Photo supplied by Mr P. Burns, St Helens Local History Room.

SITE 8: AH GAR'S CAMP

HISTORY: This site was the home of a tin miner and gardener named Ah Gar. He is remembered as being an exceptionally tall man with a very long plait down his back. Although he lived within 1-2 hours walk of Garibaldi he did not mix with the other Chinese very much. In his later years he hawked vegetables from his garden which he carried in wicker baskets slung from a bamboo pole which rested on his shoulder (B. Pitchford, personal communication).

SIGNIFICANCE: It is surprising to find a pig oven associated with a single dwelling as these were usually used for ceremonial occasions. The site is relatively undisturbed and may be an interesting subject for further archaeological investigation.

SUB SITES:

LOCATION: Lanka 5845, G.R. 804504.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Gladstone.

ACCESS: From Tebrakunna Road, 0.5km along the Garibaldi road a rough vehicular track forks to the left leading to a large disused mine and through this mine on to the Wyniford River. The track is easily passable by car but could become difficult to follow particularly where it crosses the mine. The site is completely overgrown and can only be located by a deep water race which runs at right angles to the track and intersects the site approximately 7m from the small pig oven.

CLASSIFICATION: Site types 3 and 5 - Miner's dwelling and pig oven.

DIMENSIONS: Oven height 1.10m, width at base 3.4m.

LAND TENURE: Crown land, (Department of Mines).

ENVIRONMENT: Situated amongst mature eucalypt forest which becomes denser and more varied as it approaches the river and the site. Located 200m from the west bank of the Wyniford River and within 2km of Garibaldi by road or 1km as the crow flies. The surrounding area has been extensively mined particularly near the river and there is some indication that the site itself has been disturbed by construction of water races for mining since the period of Chinese occupation.

RELICS: The only visible evidence of Chinese occupation is a small stone and earth pig oven, the precise location of the hut and garden is not clear. Water races of varying ages crisscross throughout the area.

PRESERVATION: The oven is smaller than others seen at Garibaldi and Mt. Cameron and is very well preserved. Apart from some mining activities in the area which have cut a water race through the site and almost through the oven, the site seems to have been largely undisturbed since Chinese occupation. The main threat to preservation is weathering and disturbance of the oven by growth of vegetation on or in the structure.

SOURCES: Oral - B. Shean and D. Homan (taped interviews).

RECORD: Photographs and measurements of oven, oral histories.



Plate 10: Pig oven at Ah Gar's camp showing fuel hole, and exposed stone wall at the front (north facing). The oven is enclosed in a mound of stones and earth on all sides except the front. A water race divides foreground and oven.



Plate 11: Ah Gar's oven in close-up - dimensions: height 1.10m, width across base of mound 3.4m. Tape recorder for scale is approximately 15cm x 8cm.

SITE 9: THE ARGUS

HISTORY: The Argus was a successful mine on the Wyniford River and one of the last profitable mines in the area. The miners working this claim were the only known Chinese to make use of machinery. You Hen employed a steam engine to drive a gravel pump. One of the miners (Hee Sung) spoke good English and another (Hung Wee) was said to have been artistic (D. Homan, personal communication).

SIGNIFICANCE: A well preserved encampment with several aspects of the miners lives represented - a successful mine, blacksmith, pig oven, large garden, large communal hut, smaller huts. This site is unique in that the mine was mechanised and European labour, as well as Chinese, was employed in the later years.

SUB SITES:

LOCATION: Spurrs Rivulet 5844, G.R. 810499.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Gladstone.

ACCESS: On Three Notch Track (an all weather forestry road) 1km south of Tebrakunna Road. From Tebrakunna Road, the second vehicular track to the right off Three Notch Track passes 50m to the north of the site which is situated between Three Notch Track and the Wyniford River, at a distance of 113m west of Three Notch Track.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 4 - Domestic, industrial.

DIMENSIONS: Surveyed area of site is approximately 0.2ha. Garden 12.6m x 16m.

LAND TENURE: Crown land under the administration of the Department of Mines. Some current mineral leases adjacent to the site.

ENVIRONMENT: Located 1.1km east of Garibaldi as the crow flies, the site consists of an overgrown clearing amongst mature wet sclerophyll forest, demarked from its surroundings by a thick mossy ground cover which inhibits colonisation by the native grasses of the adjacent bush. Situated approximately 100m from the east bank of the Wyniford River. Regrowth Eucalyptus sp. and Acacia sp. are establishing within the clearing except for a large furrowed area on the northeast corner of the site which appears to have been a garden, this area is free from vegetation other than mosses and grasses.

RELICS: A large cylindrical stone and earth oven used for roasting pigs is the only remaining structure. This is located on the southwest edge of the clearing near some large boulders and amongst trees. Large quantities of broken pottery and glass and rusty tools are scattered over the whole site. Water courses, prospecting holes and the furrows of a garden are clearly distinguishable. A large pile of rocks on the northeast corner of the site appears to have been a chimney or possibly a blacksmiths forge as it is larger than most domestic chimney clusters encountered and there is no evidence of a hut.

PRESERVATION: The site has been heavily fossicked by bottle collectors but minimal damage has been done and most of the site is well preserved. The major threats are the use of bulldozers or tractors for unearthing bottles and the potential for disturbance by mining.

SOURCES: Oral - B. Shean, D. Homan, C. Taylor.

RECORD: Photographs, written observation, planimetric sketch, 2 oral histories.

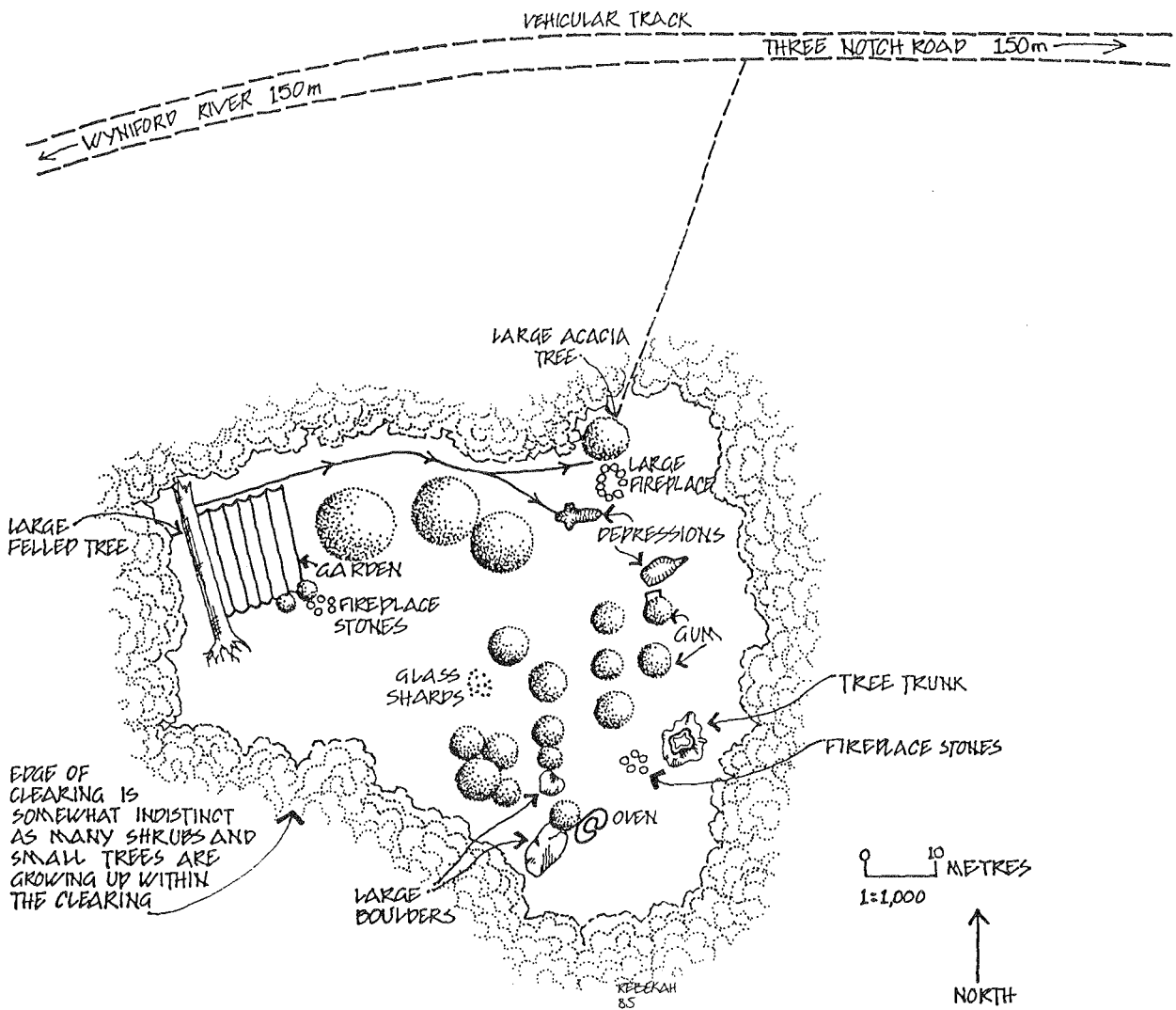


Figure 5: Planimetric sketch of the Argus camp, December 1983.
(site 9)

SITE 10: THREE NOTCH ROAD

HISTORY: The Wyniford River and its tributaries was a rich alluvial tin mining area. In c.1880-1912 many Chinese held leases in the vicinity of this site but by c.1912 almost all mining had stopped except for Hen Kee on Southern Cross Creek, You Hen on the Wyniford River and Peter Shean at the Argus and Garibaldi. The lessees of this site may have been Ah Tan (lease no 588.87, 1886-1892), Yee Gee and Sam How (lease no. 3999/93m) or H. Wood (lease no. 1251m, 1902-1912).

SIGNIFICANCE: This site has been destroyed by forestry and very little remains. A Chinese pig oven is said to have been located on the site which suggests that this may have been a central gathering place for neighbouring Chinese.

SUB SITE:

LOCATION: Spurs Rivulet 5844, G.R. 803464.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Gladstone.

ACCESS: On Three Notch Road, 4.75km from Tebrakuna Road the Wyniford makes a right angle turn to the east and crosses beneath Three Notch Road approximately 60m before a small wooden bridge which spans a tributary of the Wyniford. The site is located 35m to the east of Three Notch Road and 35m north of the Wyniford River in thick forest. Access is via log-landing on the eastern side of Three Notch Road.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 5 or 4 - Probably a single miner's dwelling.

DIMENSIONS: Not discernable. Scatters of pottery and glass localised within an area of 3m x 4m.

LAND TENURE: State forest.

ENVIRONMENT: Located in dense mixed forest on a prominent "L" shaped bend in the Wyniford River, 300m east of the river and 25m north of the bend. An active mine, The Wildcat mine, operates on the Wyniford extending to within 30-40m southwest of the site. The site is situated on the south-southeast slope of a steep hill in a heavily disturbed forest which has been recently logged. A log landing adjacent to the site on Three Notch Road contributes to the disturbance. A matrix of fallen trees obscures the site.

RELICS: Some pottery and glass fragments visible. A Chinese stone oven was located in the Wyniford River gully just 25m south of the site but no sign of this remains.

PRESERVATION: Completely destroyed in recent years by forestry.

SOURCES: Oral - A. Denis (guide).

Documentary - (Mineral Chart) Moorina 169-d, 1912; Plan of Mineral Sections County of Dorset 169-a, 1886; and 169-b, 1892; Mines Department, Hobart.

RECORD: Written observation, photographs.



Plate 12: Three Notch Road site. This is one of many sites which have been destroyed by recent forestry operations.

SITE 11: AH MOY'S STORE, RUBY FLAT

HISTORY: Prior to 1889, when the northeast railway was extended to Scottsdale, goods came by boat to Bridport from Launceston merchants (principally Chin Ah Kaw) and were transported by bullock team to Branxholm. Ah Moy travelled to Garibaldi and Weldborough with a team of horses to supply these communities with groceries and to buy pigs. He was highly successful and became something of a benefactor in the Chinese community.

SIGNIFICANCE: Established in 1882 the store and dwelling were located on one of the main Chinese mining areas in the North East until approximately 1910 when the family moved to Branxholm. Unfortunately, continued mining in the area has stripped the ground on which the store was located, to a depth of several feet destroying all trace of the structure although some shards of pottery and glass remain.

SUB SITE: See site 12.

LOCATION: Ringarooma 5643, G.R. 629393.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Alberton.

ACCESS: From Branxholm 3.5km along the Ruby Flat road a signposted trail bike track leads into the bush west of Ruby Flat road. The store is located approximately 250m along this track and 33m south.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 10 - Store and dwelling.

DIMENSIONS: The dimensions of the site are ill-defined as no wall or floor depressions were located.

LAND TENURE: Crown land, State Forest.

ENVIRONMENT: A large flat low lying area of several square kilometres, between the Ringarooma River on the west and the Branxholm Creek on the east, which was once the scene of extensive alluvial tin mining. The store is located in a central position on the Flat and close to the Ruby Flat Road. The area is now overgrown with regrowth mixed forest, predominantly Acacias, Eucalypts, bracken, coral fern and cutting grass.

RELICS: Very little remains to indicate the former presence of the store other than broken pottery and glass.

PRESERVATION: The Chinese were amongst the first miners on Ruby Flat and the area has been re-worked several times since to successively deeper levels destroying most signs of early Chinese occupation. The alluvial mining process strips the surface layer of earth (wash dirt) down to the bed rock or "bottom" (sometimes several metres deep).

SOURCES: Oral - B. Moy, T. Kincade, C. Walsh, E. Holmes.
Documentary - Naturalisation records, 1883, S.C. 415-2 State Archives, Hobart.
Lands Department Survey book J10, 1910, p7, Lands Department, Hobart.

RECORD: Written observation, 4 oral history recordings.

SITE 12: W. AH MOY'S HOME AND SHOP, BRANXHOLM

HISTORY: William Ah Hong Moy was born in Canton on 5 April 1846 and arrived in Launceston on the Mangana on 14 October 1879. He was naturalised at the age of 36 on the 18 January 1883, giving his occupation as storekeeper at Ruby Flat and signing his name with an X. He was one of only three Chinese men in the North East to bring a wife from China and in c.1910 the family moved from Ruby Flat into this house on the outskirts of Branxholm. A bootshop and store were run from the new premises and the men continued to work as miners. The family prospered and became respected members of the Branxholm community as well as benefactors to the Chinese community in the surrounding area.

SIGNIFICANCE: This is one of three Chinese homes to survive to 1984 as such is a rarity. Unfortunately the house has been severely damaged by a fallen tree, crushing the roof and part of the front wall.

SUB SITES: See site 11 (Ah Moy's Store) and site 16 (Branxholm Cemetery).

LOCATION: Derby 5644; Donald Street, Branxholm.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Derby.

ACCESS: Donald Street runs off the Tasman Highway near the Branxholm school

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 9 and 10 - Family dwelling, bootshop and garden.

DIMENSIONS: The block is approximately 35m x 15m and the original dwelling was 8.5m x 4m. The shoe shop added later, is 2m x 3m.

LAND TENURE: Privately owned by Mrs I. Jones of Legerwood.

ENVIRONMENT: The house is the last on Donald Street on the southern edge of the town. Donald Street becomes Ruby Flat Road on leaving the town leading to the main Chinese mining area in the locality. The Branxholm Joss House is located less than 1km from the house. Mining has taken place to the edges of the built up area of the town and a small creek 100m behind the house was mined by Chinese.

RELICS: The house is weatherboard with an iron roof. Although occupied by the previous owner, Mrs. H. Kincade, until approximately 1973, the house is now disintegrating, the roof having been seriously damaged by a falling tree during a severe storm. The garden behind the house contains several fruit trees, some of which were planted by the Ah Moy family. Many fragments of glass and pottery and tools can be found near the house.

PRESERVATION: The building is in very bad repair and is in danger of total collapse. Plans for the property are not known but demolition is likely.

SOURCES: Oral - B. Moy, T. Kincade, E. Holmes.

Documentary - Lands Department Survey Book J10, 1910, p7. Naturalisation records, 1883, S.C. 415-2; Hobart.

RECORD: Photographs, written observation, 3 oral histories.



Plate 13: Ah Moy's house and shop from Ruby Flat Road. Front view with shoe shop on the right in amongst bushes.



Plate 14: Back view of Ah Moy's house with shoe shop in left of frame.



Plate 15: Close-up of shoemakers shop on southern wall of Ah Moy's house.

SITE 13: AH DOO'S HUT

HISTORY: Ah Doo mined alluvial tin in the Branhholm Creek and lived alone in a one room wooden hut beside his mine. Built of split palings with a 7ft shingle roof (supported by split spars) and a gravel floor, the hut was typical of the miners dwellings of the time. A wooden chimney built up with stones at the base was used for cooking and heating. Entered by a door located near the fireplace on the adjoining wall and with one small window for additional light, the hut was dark and sparsely furnished with improvised, handmade furniture. The bed had 4 corner posts (8-10cm diameter) with hesian sacks slung from cross bars about 1m above the ground to form the base for the straw mattress. The only lining on the walls was around the bed (T. Kincade, personal communication).

SIGNIFICANCE: The site is typical of the lifestyle of the lone miner, and represents the main mode of habitation of Chinese miners at this time. Good oral information has provided a precise description of the hut and its inhabitant which could make this site a useful base in an archaeological investigation as very little information exists for other similar sites to indicate number of inhabitants, period of occupation and other details which may be illuminated by a comparative study. The site has been fossicked and superficially disturbed by forestry but is relatively well preserved.

SUB SITE:

LOCATION: Derby 5644, G.R. 624419.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Derby.

ACCESS: From Donald St, Branhholm directly behind Ah Moy's house.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 5 - Miner's dwelling.

DIMENSIONS: Hut dimensions established from depressions in the earth, approximately 3.6m by 4.4m.

LAND TENURE: Crown land.

ENVIRONMENT: Situated in disturbed eucalypt forest between Ah Moy's house and the west bank of Branhholm Creek. The ground around the site has been heavily disturbed by clearing and bulldozing but the hut site is still relatively intact.

RELICS: The chimney stones of the hut and depressions of the walls are still clearly visible. A very large earthenware pot, approximately 0.75m high and 0.35m diameter at the widest point, was found at the site by Mr T. Kincade. These jars are said to have been used for transporting the bones of the dead back to China. The skeleton was placed in the jar in the foetal position. Interestingly, the same jars are described in Chinese literature as fulfilling this purpose when ancestral burial grounds were disturbed or clans had to flee to new areas. Broken pottery, earthenware and glass is scattered about the site.

PRESERVATION: Fossickers have collected most unbroken, earthenware jar and glass bottles, and clearing operations have destroyed the environs but the site is only superficially disturbed. Being close to the township of Branhholm and easily accessible the site is likely to be subject to continued disturbance by bottle collectors.

SOURCES: Oral - T. Kincade, C. Walsh, E. Holmes.
Documentary - Han Suyin, "The Crippled Tree".

RECORD: Written observation, 3 oral history recordings.

SITE 14: BRANXHOLM JOSS HOUSE

HISTORY: Erected in 1906, the building, which was weatherboard with corrugated iron roof, wooden floor and lined with lap jointed baltic pine, was dismantled in 1928-1929 by Mr G. Watt and incorporated into his house at Branhholm (Kincade, T., personal communication). Prior to the building of the Joss House ceremonies were held in a house in the vicinity. A group of Chinese, led by Ah Moy, pooled resources and built the Joss House in a few days. Mostly local materials were used but some were ordered from Scottsdale. The location was chosen because it was close to a number of nearby mining huts and was on route from Branhholm to Ruby Flat (B. Moy, personal communication).

SIGNIFICANCE: This site is of primary significance as a religious and cultural focus for the surrounding Chinese community. It is one of four identified Joss houses in the north east and appears to have been relatively long lived.

SUB SITE: See also site 14.

LOCATION: Derby 5644, G.R. 629412.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Derby.

ACCESS: From Branhholm, 1km along Ruby Flat Road at the Branhholm tip a dirt road to the left leads to the Joss House. At the Branhholm Creek crossing a locked farm gate blocks the road. Proceeding on foot from this point the road forks at a large log landing and the left fork continues up a steep hill and the Joss House is situated near the top of this on the south southwest facing slope.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 2 - Religious site.

DIMENSIONS: The dimensions of the building could not be determined from the site but it is said to have been approximately 3m by 4m.

LAND TENURE: Private property owned by C. & D. Beswick, currently used for logging but may be cleared for stock.

ENVIRONMENT: Located on the route of an old road between the Arba mine at Branhholm (where many Chinese miners worked) and Ruby Flat. The site is situated on top of a steep hill and has a south to southeast aspect. It presents as an island of regrowth mixed forest surrounded by a largely clear-felled area. Vegetation cover is predominantly Acacias, Eucalypts, bracken fern, cutting grass and moss.

RELICS: There is nothing to suggest the existence of the former building other than scatters of pottery, earthenware and glass fragments.

PRESERVATION: According to local sources timber from the Joss House may have been mainly used in the construction of Mr George Watt's garage (Bygone Branx). The site has narrowly missed recent forestry developments by the present owner and may be subject to clearing or development at any stage. Fossickers have removed most relics from the site.

SOURCES: Oral - B. Moy, T. Kincade, C. Walsh, E. Holmes.

RECORD: Written observation, black and white photographs, 4 taped oral history interviews.

SITE 15: AH YEW'S CAMP, BRANXHOLM

HISTORY: Ah Yew was a tin miner and in his later years became the caretaker of the Joss House until he died in 1926.

SIGNIFICANCE: The single dwelling offers an opportunity to study the predominant lifestyle of most Chinese and this dwelling is unusual as it was located to provide a caretaker for the Joss House (Kincade, T.). The occupant was also engaged in mining and it is likely that his dual role will be reflected in some lifestyle differences.

SUB SITE: See also site 14.

LOCATION: Derby 5644, G.R. 629412.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Derby.

ACCESS: As for site no. 10, Branxholm Joss House. The dwelling is located approximately 24m south of the Joss House.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 5 - Dwelling site.

DIMENSIONS: The area of pottery and glass fragments is approximately 9m by 9m.

LAND TENURE: Private property owned by C. and D. Beswick, currently used for logging but may be cleared for stock in the near future.

ENVIRONMENT: Located within 25m of the Branxholm Joss House. The site is located on top of a large hill and presents as a small (approximately 9m by 9m) flat, partial clearing on the edge of a steep slope to the south and southeast.

RELICS: Considerable quantities of earthenware, china and glass shards, lie on the surface of the site and a pile of large stones may be a chimney butt from the hut. No depressions of the hut walls were discernable.

PRESERVATION: The site is more intact than the Joss House despite fossicking, and disturbance due to forestry and land clearance. Future development of the site, or fossicking, could cause further deterioration.

SOURCES: Oral - T. Kincade, C. Walsh, E. Holmes.

RECORD: Photographs, planimetric sketch, written observation, and 3 oral history interviews.

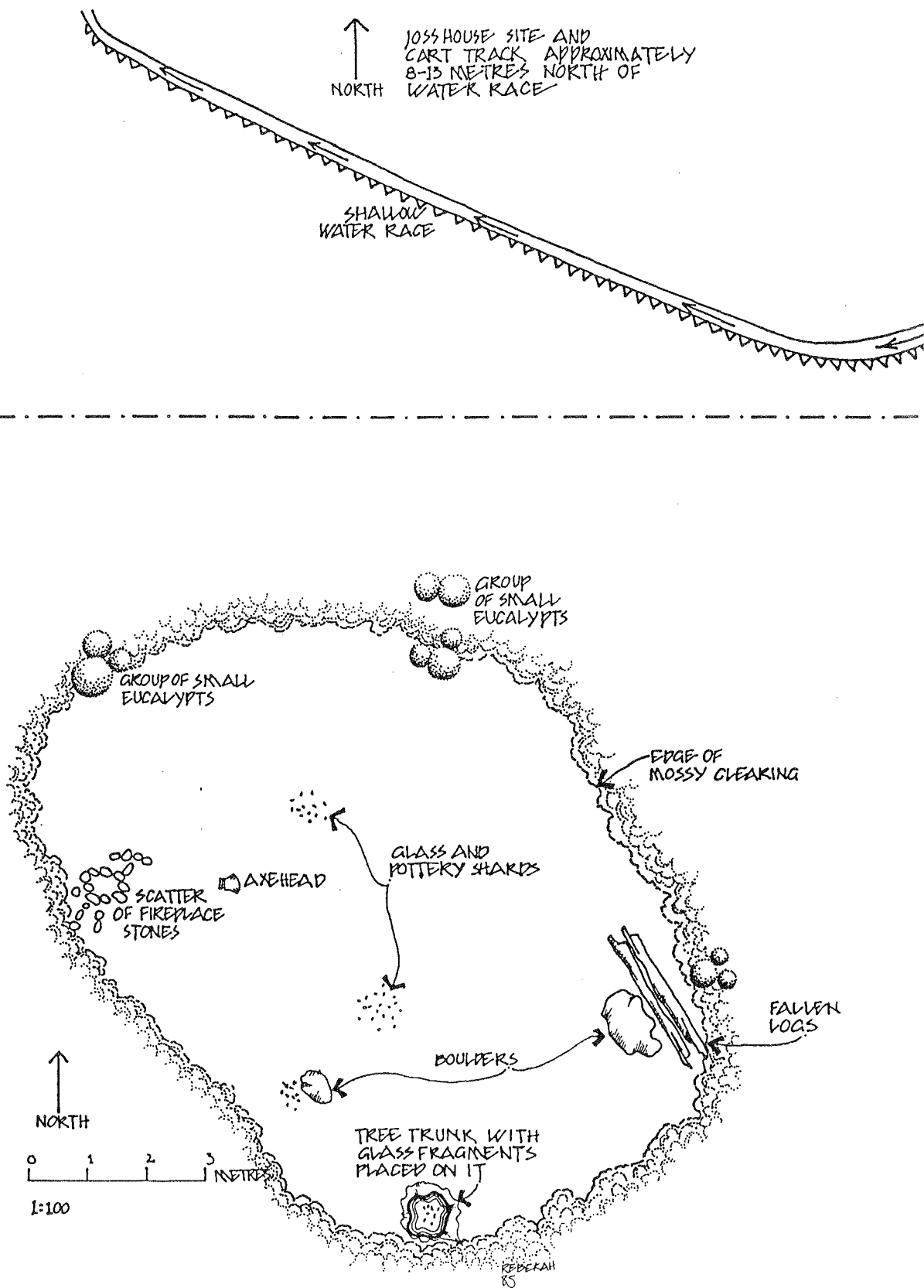


Figure 6 :: Planimetric map of Ah Yew's camp near the Branhholm Joss House.
(site 12) grid reference 629 412

SITE 16: BRANXHOLM CEMETERY

HISTORY: Most of the Chinese in the Branhholm area worked on the Ormuz mine and at Ruby Flat. Branhholm remained a European mining town and apart from the Ah Moy family the Chinese, with a few notable exceptions, kept to themselves coming into the town only for supplies. During the peak alluvial tin mining period (c.1880-1890) there were approximately 100-200 Chinese in the area but numbers gradually diminished as areas were worked out and as tin prices fell, and the price slump during WWI was the final blow to most small scale tin mining.

SIGNIFICANCE: The cemetery contains the graves of Mr W. Ah Moy and his daughter Mrs. E. Eager, one of only three, pure Chinese families in the northeast. Unlike most other Chinese graves in the northeast these are oriented in the same direction as the surrounding European graves and occupy a central position in the cemetery.

SUB SITE: See site 10, Ah Moy's store.

LOCATION: Derby 5644, G.R. 634424.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Derby.

ACCESS: On the Tasman Highway 1km east of Branhholm.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 8 - Cemetery.

DIMENSIONS: 150m x 125m.

LAND TENURE: Cemetery reserve.

ENVIRONMENT: Located 1km east of Branhholm township near the Arba and the Ormuz mines on a gentle east facing slope. The two graves are side by side in a central position in the cemetery and are surrounded by unmarked graves. Some of these unmarked graves are concave hollows rather than the usual mound. It is possible that they may be Chinese graves and the bones may have been exhumed and sent back to China, as was apparently the custom for most Chinese who had the facility to make such provisions. This custom may also explain the large number of unmarked graves, as the eventual aim was to return the body to the ancestral burial grounds in China.

RELICS: The grave of Mr W. Ah Moy bearing the inscription "In Loving Memory of AH MOY Died 5th August 1908" (in English) and three columns of Chinese characters. The grave of his daughter Mrs Emily Eager, bearing the inscription "In loving memory of Emilly Eager who died 1940 age 50" (in English) inscription by J. Dunn.

PRESERVATION: The graves are very well preserved but the headstone of Mr Ah Moy's grave is tilting forward slightly.

SOURCES: Oral - Mr B. Moy (son of W. Ah Moy), taped interview.

RECORD: Written observation, photographs, oral history tape.



Plate 16: Ah Moy's headstone in the Branhholm Cemetery.



Plate 17: Emily Eager's headstone in the Branhholm Cemetery (Ah Moy's daughter).



Plate 18: Ah Moy's and Emily Eager's graves in the Branhholm Cemetery showing unmarked graves behind.

SITE 17: TIN POT CREEK, CASCADES

HISTORY: This site is located in the region known as the Cascades which was once a major Chinese tin mining centre with small alluvial mines scattered from Bells Hill to Weldborough and Branhholm. In the period c.1885-1891 12 out of 20 mineral leases on Tin Pot Creek and its tributaries were held by Chinese. This site (lease no. 143A) was leased by Robert Gardner and a neighbouring site (1429M) by Ah Hete between 1885-1891. The lease was probably worked by Chinese miners on tribute or may have been worked by the Chinese at a later date.

SIGNIFICANCE: Tin Pot Creek is probably representative of most of the mining sites in the area but it has been heavily disturbed by forestry in recent years. According to local sources three hut sites were found on the site prior to clearing in 1978, but only two hut sites were located by this survey in November 1983.

LOCATION: Ringarooma 5643, G.R. 690377.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Alberton.

ACCESS: A forestry road connecting Mt Paris Dam Road to Carnac Road runs within 30m of the southern boundary of the site which is located 40m before the third crossing of Tin Pot Creek.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 4 - Mining site with cluster of three (or more) dwellings.

DIMENSIONS: The clearing is approximately 50m x 60m.

LAND TENURE: State Forest.

ENVIRONMENT: Located on a north to northeast facing slope near the top of a hill, the site presents as a clearing surrounded by regrowth wet sclerophyll forest approximately 2m - 4m high. The clearing is covered by a thick growth of foxgloves (*Digitalis*). Bracken fern, mosses and grasses are the only other common vegetation types. The entire area of the clearing has been dug up, perhaps originally by the miners, but recently a bulldozer has turned some ground in search of bottles. The site is bounded by Tin Pot Creek on the east and a forestry road on the south. It is not known whether this road was in existence during the period when this site was occupied.

RELICS: Very few bottles were found but fragments of Chinese ceramics, mainly glazed, earthenware, rice wine jars and china bowls were thinly dispersed about the site. Three hearths were found at the site prior to logging in 1978 and subsequent burning in 1980 only two of these were located by this survey in 1983. One chimney and hut was clearly defined and an adjacent area appears to have been a very small garden.

PRESERVATION: The site has been heavily disturbed and most of it is completely destroyed. All forestry has finished in the area so no further disturbance is anticipated.

SOURCES: Oral - R. Smith (guide).

Documentary - Plan of Mineral Sections County of Dorset, Sheet No 1, 149-b, 1885; Office of Mines, Hobart.

RECORD: Written observation, photographs, planimetric sketch.

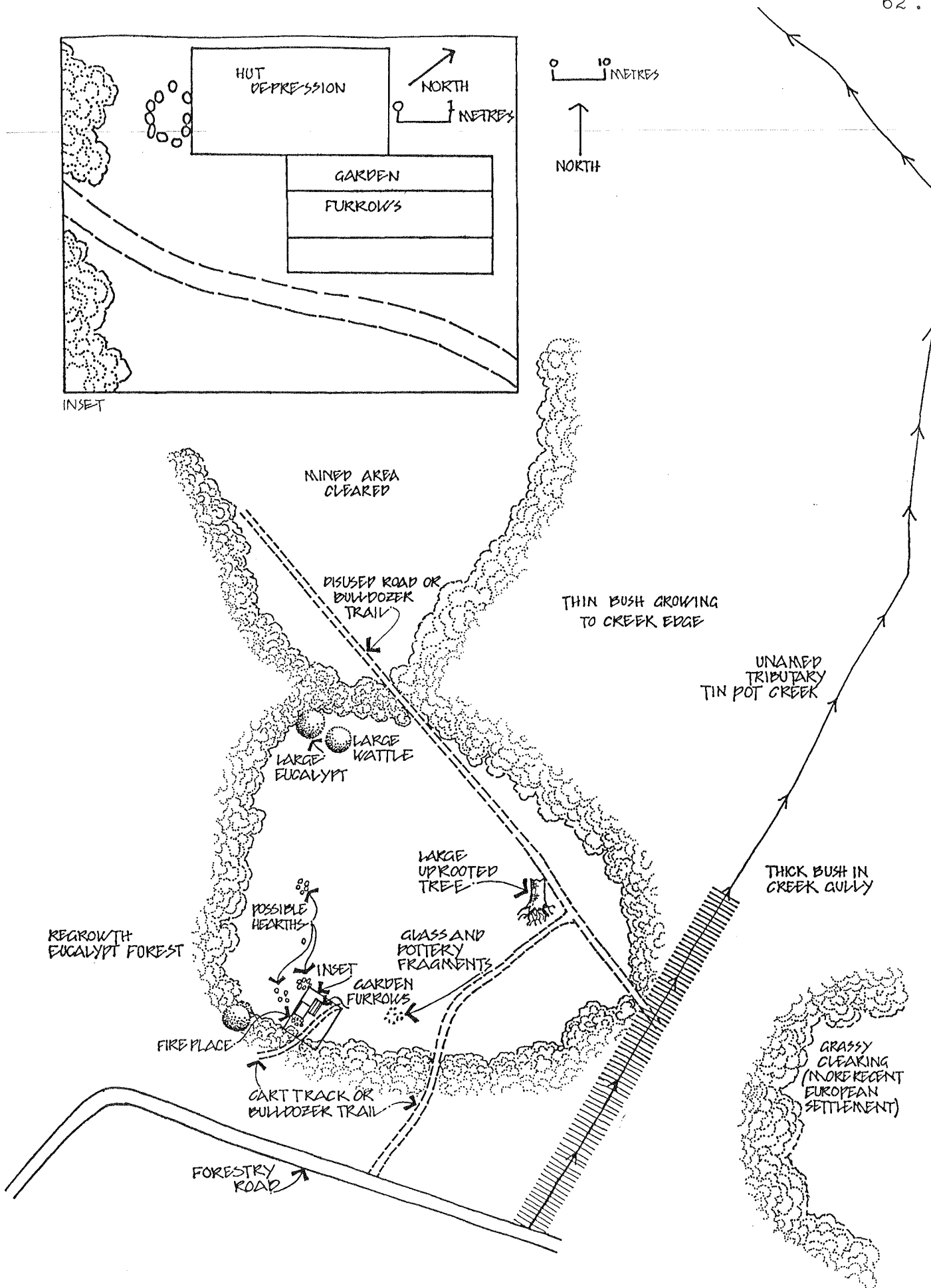


Figure 7: Planimetric sketch of Tin Pot Creek, the Cascades.

SITE 18: GOLD CREEK/CASCADES

HISTORY: Gold Creek is not named but is drawn on an 1885 Mineral Chart which shows that the area was leased exclusively by Chinese. There are 3 leases held on the creek, the lessees being Hee Sing (Lease No. 2018/87M), Ah Sing (Lease No. 274/87M), and Wah Lee (1273M).

SIGNIFICANCE: Despite considerable disturbance, this site is a classic example of the miner's dwelling and demonstrates very well the relationship between the dwelling and the mine. In this case two hut sites are located side by side on a small island created by mining on all sides which has dug away the ground to about 3m depth within 2m of the huts. In many cases hut sites could have been mined away completely if a rich tin face was found to extend under the hut.

SUB SITE: Neighbouring hut site totally destroyed - no record made.

LOCATION: Ringarooma 5643, G.R. 685396.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Alberton.

ACCESS: A forestry road leads to within 100m of the site stopping at a log landing.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 5 and 6 - Miner's dwelling site and mine workings.

DIMENSIONS: The island upon which the hut sites are located is 10m x 20m.

LAND TENURE: State Forest.

ENVIRONMENT: The site is situated 20m south of Gold Creek and is surrounded on the east, west and south by mine workings which extend to the Creek. The mined strip along the Creek is vegetated with Myrtles, Acacias and tall manferns but the surrounding area is a devastated woodchipped hillside which was hot fired in 1982 prior to regeneration with selected, aerially sown Eucalypt species. The ground cover consists of sparse growths of lichen, reeds, bracken, manferns and young Eucalypts growing on churned up soil between the debris of the fire. A bulldozed fire trail passes through the site destroying the location of one of the huts.

RELICS: Fragments of Chinese pottery are abundantly distributed in concentrations mainly on the southern side of the site. Several undamaged, glazed, earthenware, rice wine bottles (also known as Tiger Whisky bottles) and an opium pipe were retrieved from this site by collectors as well as a copper tin with brass soldered edges, 7cm high x 5cm wide x 2cm deep. Two piles of chimney stones remain as evidence of the location of dwellings.

PRESERVATION: Surface fossicking has occurred and the site has been heavily disturbed in areas by recent clearfelling operations, but one hut location appears only superficially damaged.

SOURCES: Oral - R. Smith (guide).

Documentary - Plan of Mineral Sections County of Dorset, Sheet No. 1, 149-b, 1885-1891; Department of Mines, Hobart.

RECORD: Written observation, photographs, planimetric sketch.

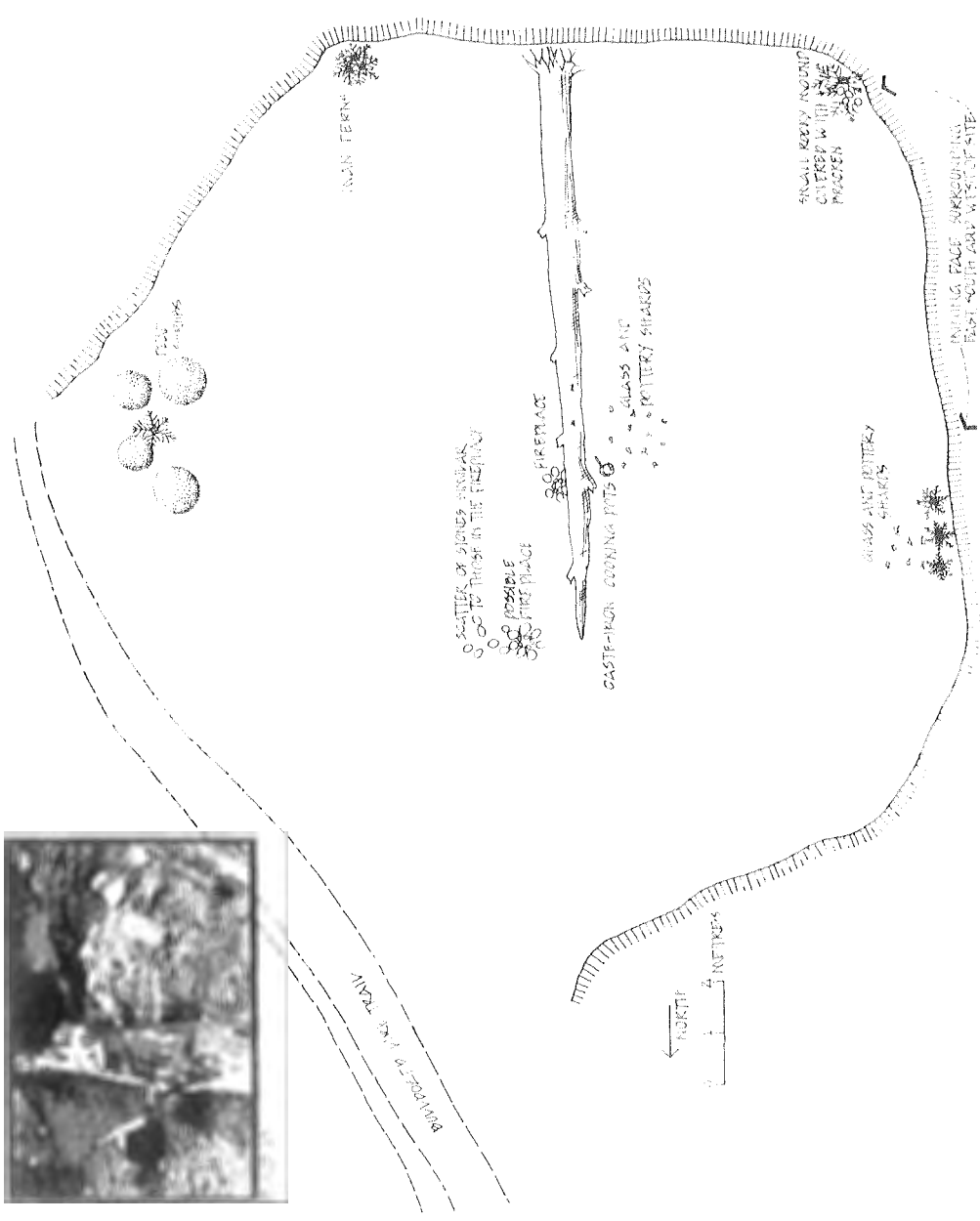


Figure 8: Planimetric sketch of Gold Creek site showing the surrounding mine workings. Inset photo shows the condition of the site. (site 18)

Plate 19: Fireplace, pottery, pots and glass in the middle of a clear felled area at Gold Creek, Cascades.

SITE 19: OLD CASCADE ROAD, CASCADES

HISTORY: Situated on a water course on which 10 out of 13 mineral leases were held by Chinese in 1885. This site was leased by Gun Hang c.1885 (lease no. 1063M).

SIGNIFICANCE: This site is very similar to site 20 in appearance resembling a large well kept lawn in a bush clearing. It seems relatively undisturbed and is an example of a third type of dwelling site, which is not clearly classifiable, i.e. a large grassy environ as opposed to the tiny bush hut or small settlement. This suggests a greater permanency and higher standard of living which allowed the development of a grassed area around the dwelling, probably for horses or other stock. Very few relics remain to explain the size of the site (approximately the same as the Garibaldi clearing) but chimney stones and the depressions of the walls and floor of a hut are clearly visible, as is the patch of an old cart track and the furrows of a vegetable garden.

SUB SITE:

LOCATION: Ringarooma 5643, G.R. 699387.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Derby.

ACCESS: Easy access on Old Cascade Road.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type uncertain, possibly 4 or 5 - Dwelling and garden.

DIMENSIONS: Clearing approximately 175m x 75m or 1.3ha.

LAND TENURE: State Forest.

ENVIRONMENT: A low lying flat site at the junction of East Creek, Cascade River and an unnamed tributary of the Cascade. Bounded by the Old Cascade Road on the south, the Cascade River on the north and an unnamed tributary or large water race on the west. Covered by a short lawn with occasional clumps of tea tree and some loan Acacias and Eucalyptus situated mainly nearly the edges of the site. Foxgloves grown in patches near the edges of the clearing.

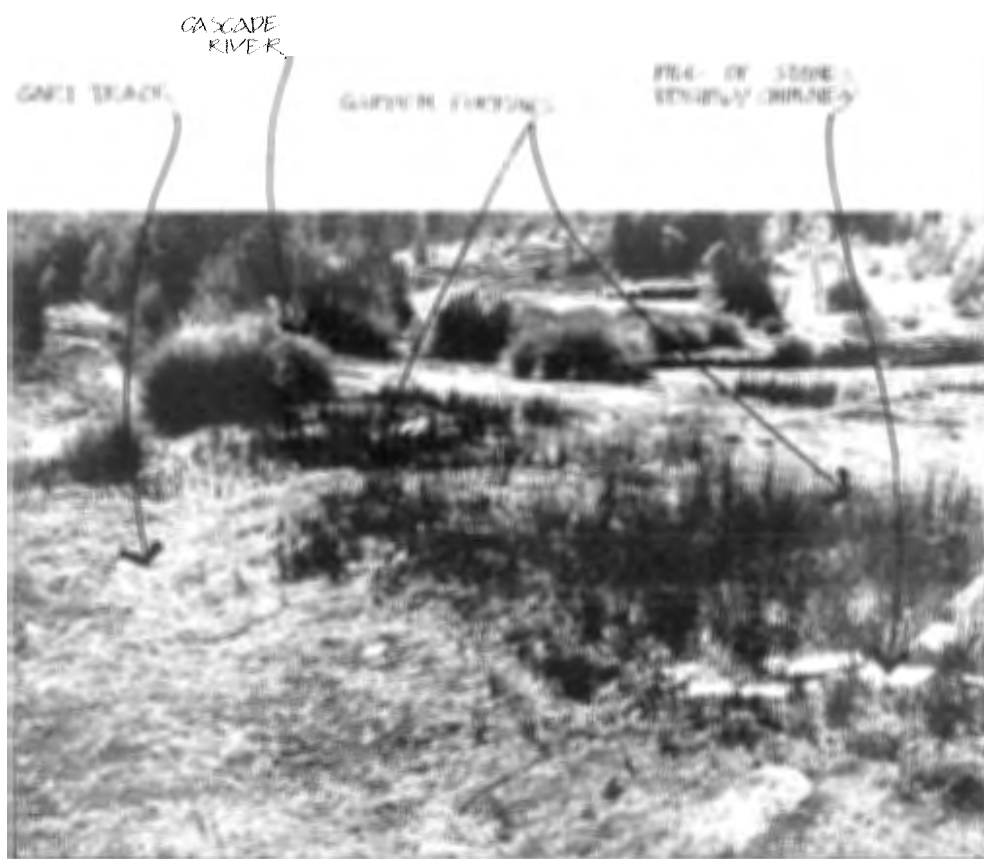
RELICS: The depression of a hut with a pile of chimney stones located at one end is situated in the north east corner of the site near the access from Old Cascade Road. An old cart track crosses the centre of the clearing from north to south and near the centre of the site is a slightly terraced furrowed area which appears to have been a garden and may have been the site of a second dwelling. Very few bottles or ceramic jars have been found on this site by collectors but fragments of Chinese earthenware, rice wine and soy sauce jars and green china bowls can be found in the vicinity of the hut and garden sites.

PRESERVATION: Most of the site appears almost totally undisturbed apart from surface fossicking. However, the entrance to the site from Old Cascade Road has recently been used as a log landing, destroying the southern portion of the site adjacent to the road. Road frontages are often chosen for hut sites, so it is quite possible that the disturbed area, although only a small proportion of the total site, may have been the location of one or more dwellings.

SOURCES: Oral - R. Smith (guide).

Documentary - Plan of Mineral Sections County of Dorset, Sheet No. 1, 149-b, 1885-1891.

RECORD: Written observation, photographs.



Old Cascade Road Site

Plate 20: Photo taken from cart track at the centre of the site facing N.N.E., with track, garden furrows and possible chimney stones.

SITE 20: GRASS PADDOCKS, THE CASCADES

HISTORY: In the 1880s the area known as "The Cascades" was dominated by Chinese miners and in 1885 Britannia Creek (which flows into the Cascade River opposite this site) was leased entirely by Chinese. The site is shown on mineral maps in the late 1880s as being leased by Mr Robert Gardner and later Mr J. Murdoch (149-b, 1885-1891; and 210-a, 1889-1902). It is highly likely that the Chinese worked the leases on tribute as the former, Mr Robert Gardner, also held the lease on another Chinese site in the area (site 17). The precise occupancy of the site is unknown and some conflict exists between local sources. Some regard this site and not site 21 as the site of Ah Choon's store. I have based the classification of site 21 on 3 oral reports.

SIGNIFICANCE: The site seems relatively undisturbed and is an example of a third "type" of dwelling site (which has not been classifiable on current information) the open grassy paddock, as opposed to the tiny bush hut or the settlement. This environment may have been created by miners cultivating grass for horses or other stock (once established grass inhibits revegetation by native plant species) which suggests greater permanency and a higher living standard than the majority of Chinese miners enjoyed. The main area of this site appears totally undisturbed with only small pits dug by fossickers to retrieve bottles. As little is known of the exact nature of the site and it is fairly extensive further investigation may be productive.

SUB SITE:

LOCATION: Ringarooma 5643, G.R. 711379.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Alberton.

ACCESS: Road access but can be difficult to locate. Turn left off Mt Paris Dam Road on to Carnac Road 1km east of the Mt Paris Dam. Carnac road crosses the East Cascade River and follows it for 2km to a sharp hairpin turn off to the right which almost immediately crosses an unnamed creek. The site is located 1km along this road.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type uncertain, possibly 4, 5 or 10 - Dwelling and/or a store.

DIMENSIONS: Cleared area of approximately 50m x 30m.

LAND TENURE: State Forest.

ENVIRONMENT: Situated at the northern edge of a pine location near the junction of an unnamed creek and the Cascade River and opposite the confluence of the Britannia Creek and the Cascade River. The site is a large, low lying, grassy flat, surrounded on the west and south west by an expanse of swampy ground extending to the Cascade River. The swamp may have been created by mining. To the north and east the site is surrounded by steep hills which are covered with pine plantations. In the late 1800's and early 1900's these hills and the tributaries of the Cascade River were peppered with small alluvial tin mines. The roadside bordering the eastern edge of the site is lined with approximately 6 rows of pines which cease at the open grassed area of the site.

RELICS: Two piles of heaped stones indicate chimney butts and, in addition to the usual scatters of glass earthenware and china fragments, a set of rusty scales and several shovel heads were found. A large flat terraced area on the western edge of the site is supported by wooden, sleeper like, edges. A large number of Chinese bottles and earthenware jars were retrieved from this site by Mr T. Kincade.

SOURCES: Oral (taped interviews) - T. Kincade.

Documentary - Plan of Mineral Sections County of Dorset, 210-a, 1889.

Plan of Mineral Sections County of Dorset, Sheet No 1, 149-b, 1885, Department of Mines, Hobart.

RECORD: Planimetric sketch, photographs, written observations, one taped oral history.

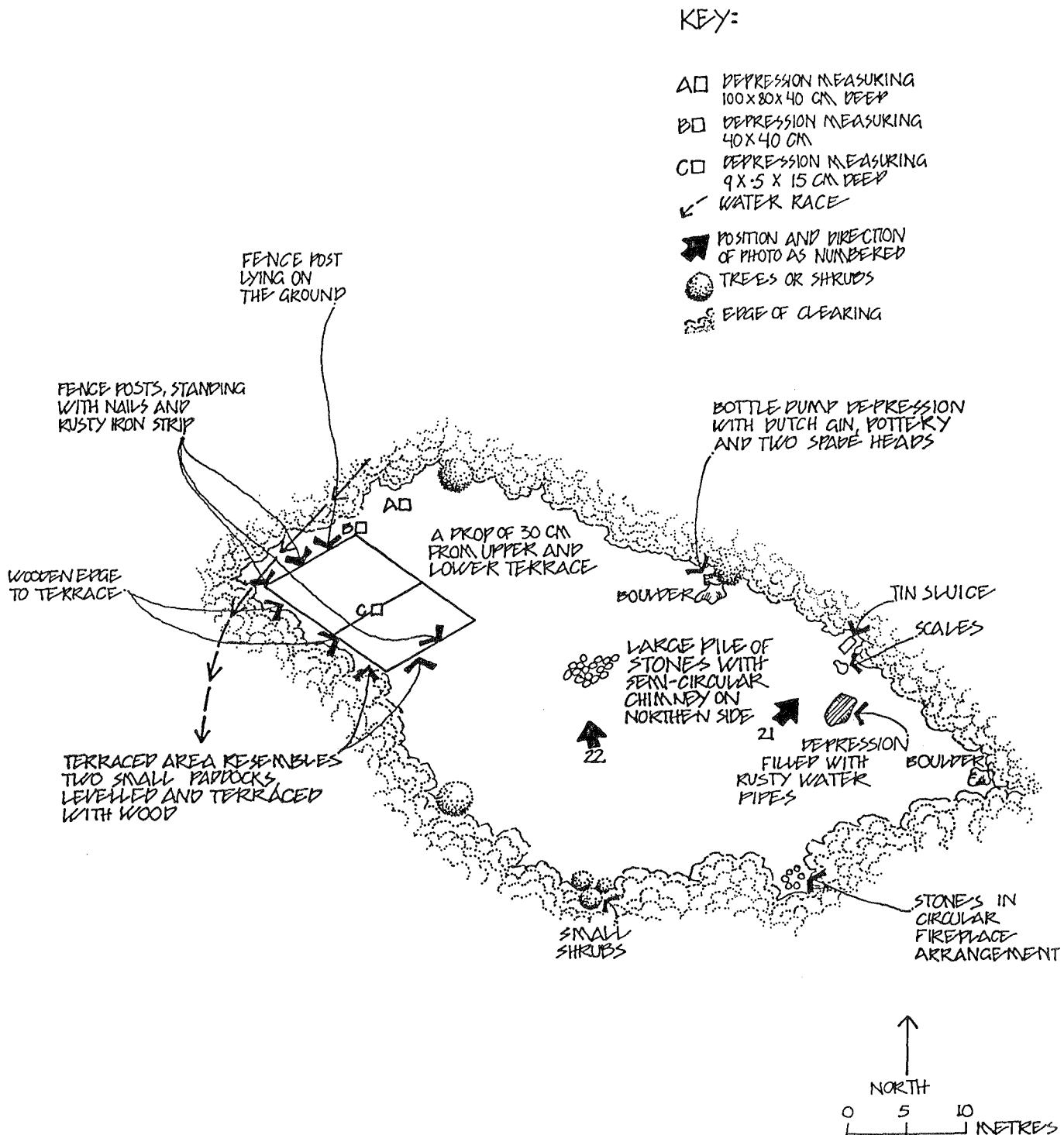


Figure 9: Planimetric sketch of Grass Paddocks site (site 20), showing position of photo for plates 21 and 22.

Grass Paddocks, Cascades.

Plate 21: Entrance to site taken from northern edge of clearing looking towards forestry road (unnamed), showing old scales and tin sluicing tray.





Grass Paddocks, Cascades.

Plate 22: Pile of rocks with central semi-circular arrangement, possibly chimney or pig oven.

SITE 21: AH CHOON'S STORE, CASCADES

HISTORY: Ah Choon was a miner, shop owner and butcher and was a very well known figure in the mining communities from Weldborough to Branhholm. His store supplied miners with all their provisions including pork which, according to oral sources, he raised in a concrete floored piggery as early as 1917. He hawked his wares with horse and cart to miners dispersed throughout the Cascades. He is remembered by the children of Derby (now old men and women) for his generosity, and the story is told of his parting gift to them, which was free admission to the cinema for all the children of the town. Ah Choon was born in China in 1861, arrived in Australia in 1886 and was naturalised in 1893, giving his residence as Moorina and his occupation as miner (S.C. 415/5, 1/3/1893).

SIGNIFICANCE: The site has been virtually destroyed by fossickers as a bulldozer has been used to unearth bottles. The enormous amount of bottles strewn about this site and predominance of liquor bottles would suggest that this was also a meeting place/drinking house, and possibly a gambling house, since these two activities so often take place together and gambling was one of the major recreational pastimes of the Chinese. This is the only store which has been located in the Cascades (and the only one which has been mentioned in oral and documentary sources). It is thus important as a unique site, a centre for the major mining district known as the Cascades, and its association with a well remembered personality amongst the Chinese.

SUB SITE:

LOCATION: Ringarooma 5643, G.R. 709388.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Derby.

ACCESS: The store is difficult to locate as it is not on any defined route. Access is via a fire trail created in 1981, which leads south from a log landing at the terminus of a forestry road, crosses East Creek twice and breaks into a small clearing just before the third crossing. The trail is then abandoned. Six Acacias, approximately 50ft tall, mark the point on the northern edge of the clearing where the forest is entered (compass bearing of 22 from a central point in the clearing. A tributary of East Creek is encountered 20m into the forest. This is crossed and followed keeping it 10-20m to the left. In less than 5 minutes walking the forest opens and Ah Choon's lies immediately ahead in a small uneven clearing.

CLASSIFICATION: Classification uncertain, probably site type 10 - Shop/gambling house, piggery and dwelling.

DIMENSIONS: The clearing is approximately 10m x 10m.

LAND TENURE: State forest.

ENVIRONMENT: Clearing in patch of myrtle forest. See "ACCESS".

RELICS: Bottles seem to span a long period, with the Dutch gin and Chinese pottery bottles and more recent crown seal beer bottles found in large numbers.

PRESERVATION: Virtually destroyed by a bulldozer.

SOURCES: Oral - R. Smith, B. Moy, B. Pitchford.

Documentary - Plan Mineral County of Dorset, K.No. 4, 1946 (3 buildings are shown).

RECORD: Written observation, photographs, oral histories.



WATER
RACE

Plate 23: Site of Ah Choon's store showing the large quantities of broken glass and pottery and the disturbed ground. A water race runs parallel to the right border of the photo. Direction of photo $< 50^{\circ}$ taken from 8m past emergence into clearing from the bush.

SITE 22: MOORINA CEMETERY AND CHINESE MEMORIAL

HISTORY: In the late 1800s Moorina was a distribution and transport centre as important as Boobyalla, as well as a mining town. Linked by road to the railhead at Scottsdale, and the Port of Boobyalla, it was conveniently central to the townships of Garibaldi, Weldborough, the Blue Tier, Derby and Bransholme. Many Chinese lived in the vicinity claims on the Frome and Weld Rivers and in the Cascades, and in 1900 a Chinese camp, consisting of a large number of small buildings, lined a street in the town. A Chinese Christian Missionary, Bartholomew Wong Poo, lived at Moorina from 1885-1893, using it as his base for mission work to the Chinese of the surrounding area.

SIGNIFICANCE: The entrance to Moorina Cemetery carries a sign, erected by the Lands Department, saying "Chinese Cemetery". Like the Weldborough Cemetery, Moorina has a memorial erected by local Chinese to their dead. The memorials are very similar in design, construction and location within the cemetery but the memorial at Moorina has been recently restored. There are apparently many Chinese graves in the Moorina Cemetery but none of them are marked.

SUB SITE:

LOCATION: Derby 5644, G.R. 729463.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Moorina.

ACCESS: On the Tasman Highway 375m east of the Moorina Bridge over the Ringarooma River.

CLASSIFICATION: Cemetery and memorial.

DIMENSIONS: The cemetery is 50m x 125m and the memorial 3.34m x 3.9m. The block supporting the memorial stone is 1.24m wide, 70cm high and 0.86m deep, with the stone itself 59cm wide 5cm thick, 1.1m high. The oven has a cubic base (90cm³) and a conical Flue measuring 1.26m high, 80cm in diameter at the base and 14cm diameter at the apex. Total height of structure is 2.16m.

LAND TENURE: Cemetery reserve.

ENVIRONMENT: Located on the east facing slope of a hill overlooking the Weld and Frome Rivers on the main route between the Weldborough/Cascades mining centres and Garibaldi. The monument is located in the south east quarter of the cemetery.

RELICS: The memorial comprises a concrete slab enclosed by a wrought iron fence with an entrance gate in the centre of the East side. Within the enclosure a ceremonial oven and memorial headstone stand on a concrete slab. The oven has a cubic base with a conical flue, iron door with lifting latch mechanism (on the South side) and air vents at ground level on the East, North and West sides. The marble headstone is engraved with English and Chinese characters. The English inscription reads "This stone has been erected by the Chinese of Garibaldi, Argus and Moorina as a place of worship of Confucius religion to the departed Chinese in the Moorina Cemetery", D. Morgan. The date is given in Chinese characters meaning "32nd year of Kuang Hsu" namely 1906.

PRESERVATION: The monument has recently been renovated and is in good condition.

SOURCES: Documentary - Ex., 4 Aug, 1888. Naturalisation records, file No 1563, CSD 16/Vol. 49., Tasmanian State Archives, Hobart.

RECORD: Written observation and photographs.



Plate 24: Chinese memorial headstone at Moorina Cemetery.
Photo taken from the west, headstone facing east.

Plate 25: Chinese memorial at Moorina Cemetery showing the
front view of the oven and side view of the
memorial headstone. Photo taken from south facing
north.



SITE 23: SOUTH MOUNT CAMERON CHINESE CAMP

HISTORY: This seems to have been a small camp, township, which served the Chinese of the surrounding area. It may have also provided a convenient resting place for travellers from the mining centres of Garibaldi, Weldborough, Moorina and the Cascades on their way to Boobyalla Port. Many Chinese worked small alluvial mines in the vicinity of the camp, from the slopes of Mount Cameron to the many creeks and tributaries of the Ringarooma River. The area was leased, under three separate leases, by Quong Sing, Quong Lee and Ah Him between 1902 and 1911.

SIGNIFICANCE: A small settlement site located near some very rich alluvial tin deposits and on the main route to the Port of Boobyalla from the mining centres of Garibaldi and Moorina. Very little is known about the Chinese in this area and an archaeological excavation may provide information which is missing from both written and oral sources.

SUB SITE:

LOCATION: Lanka 5845, G.R. 807583.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Gladstone.

ACCESS: From Gladstone, the site is on Gladstone Road approximately 800m south of South Mount Cameron township. An oiled weatherboard house with red roof now stands on the site which is on the corner of Gladstone Road and an unnamed dirt road which is the first turn off to the left after Ruby Creek bridge (travelling South).

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 1 - Chinese camp.

DIMENSIONS: The area defined by the garden of the present house is approximately 25m x 53m.

LAND TENURE: Privately owned by R. Barker, Launceston.

ENVIRONMENT: Situated on the eastern side of Gladstone Road on the southern outskirts of South Mount Cameron township, the site is bordered on the west and north by roads. Its location is approximately halfway between Gladstone and Pioneer on the main route between the port of Boobyalla and the township of Moorina. The surrounding area for many kilometres in all directions has been mined for tin and is now mostly bare ground. Ruby Creek passes 100m to the north of the site which is now the location of a small old house and garden and most of the area is covered by lawn with a surrounding border of thin, low scrub (predominantly tea tree, bracken fern and blackberries).

RELICS: The area has been heavily fossicked by bottle collectors and bulldozers have been used in the search, which has yielded many Chinese earthenware jars. The depressions of three or four huts are discernable on the front lawn.

PRESERVATION: Fossickers have caused considerable damage to the edges of the site but the area which is part of the house and garden is relatively untouched. The site is likely to remain in its present state of preservation while the house (which is unoccupied) remains standing.

SOURCES: Oral - A. Denis (guide).

Documentary - Mineral Chart South Mount Cameron, 197-c, 1902-1911, Lands Department, Hobart.

RECORD: Photographs and written observation.



Plate 26: Photo of South Mount Cameron Chinese camp site.

SITE 24: RUBY CREEK (2,0) CAMP 1

HISTORY: The leases covering this area were held by John Simpson and Ah Nun between 1892-1896 and by Hop Wah between 1902-1911. John Simpson held the first mineral leases in the area and employed Chinese miners on tribute to work the ground. Local sources tell of a belief that the Chinese were the first to discover the tin in the area and their claim was jumped by John Simpson. Many Chinese miners began by working on tribute until they had sufficient money to take out their own lease, alone, or in partnership with other Chinese.

SIGNIFICANCE: As most of the Chinese chose to live at their mine sites the miners hut was probably the most common form of habitation at the time. The small scale style of mining meant that individual labourers were not uncommon but often mining took place with troupes of 2-5 working a lease. This hut was located 250m from a neighbouring hut and within 1km of the small settlement of South Mount Cameron. It is likely that the two huts were occupied by miners who were working the same leases in partnership and there may have been more than one occupant per hut. Aspects of the lifestyle of the Chinese miner may be deduced from this site and the neighbouring site 25. Due to its relationship to the Chinese camp and the mine managers house at South Mt Cameron, and the neighbouring hut sites this is a more interesting site than it would otherwise be, given its disturbed condition.

SUB SITE: (See also site 25).

LOCATION: Lanka 5845, G.R. 801582.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, Gladstone.

ACCESS: From the south of first left turn off Gladstone Road before Ruby Creek leads to a couple of houses and a turning circle. Proceed on foot down the track to the right which crosses Ruby Creek. The site is located in dry sclerophyll forest approximately 100m over the creek and 250m West of the track.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 5 - Miner's dwelling site.

DIMENSIONS: The site is completely overgrown and consequently it is ill-defined, but the dimensions of the hut appear to have been approximately 2.3m x 4m.

LAND TENURE: Crown land.

ENVIRONMENT: Located between Ruby Creek and a tributary, within 500m of Gladstone Road. Years of small-scale mining has left the area criss-crossed with water races and small mine faces about 1m - 2m deep. The vegetation cover is well established and is predominantly Banksia, Acacia, Eucalypt and some tea tree and cutting grass.

RELICS: Cast iron cooking pots and pottery fragments mark the location of the hut but depressions of the walls were not discernable and no definite pile of chimney stones was found.

PRESERVATION: Fossickers have removed the best preserved bottles and earthenware soy sauce and rice wine containers but scattered fragments are abundant. The ground does not appear to have been disturbed for a long time. Mining on a very small scale is still continuing in the area but is unlikely to affect the site.

SOURCES: Oral - A. Denis (guide).

Documentary - Plan of Mineral Sections South Mount Cameron, Sheet No 7, 197-a, 1892-1896 and 197-c, 1902-1911, Department of Mines, Hobart.

RECORD: Written observation, photographs.

11.

SITE 25: RUBY CREEK (20) CAMP 2

HISTORY: See site 24.

SIGNIFICANCE: This miner's hut is located within 250m of a neighbouring hut and 750m from a small Chinese settlement. This distribution of dwellings seems typical of the tin fields, with miner's choosing to live on their mines and small settlements growing up at convenient central locations on the major transport routes. The site is representative and its relationship to neighbouring sites gives it added interest but it is in poor condition.

SUB SITE: See site 24.

LOCATION: Lanka 5845, G.R. 800582.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Gladstone.

ACCESS: As for site 15, the site is located on foot, 100m past Ruby Creek and 500m west of the road, walking parallel to the creek.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 5 - Miner's dwelling site.

DIMENSIONS: Hut size approximately 2.3m X 4m.

LAND TENURE: Crown land.

ENVIRONMENT: Situated near the north bank of Ruby Creek between the creek and one of its tributaries in an area which has been mined extensively and is criss-crossed with small mine faces approximately 1m - 2m deep, and dry shallow water races, approximately 20cm - 30cm deep and 30cm - 50cm wide. The surrounding area, from Mount Cameron to the Ringarooma River, was peppered with small alluvial tin mines in the 1880s. The site is located within 20 minutes walk of the main route between Boobyalla Port and the mining centres of Pioneer, Garibaldi, Moorina and Weldborough, and equally close to the small Chinese camp at South Mount Cameron. The locality of the hut and adjacent mine workings is now revegetated predominantly by Banksias and Acacias with some Eucalypts and tea tree and an understorey of cutting grass and bracken fern.

RELICS: A cluster of large, moss covered stones arranged in a semi-circular manner, is probably the remains of the chimney butt. No depressions of the hut walls were located. In 1974-75 Chinese ceramic rice wine jars and assorted glass bottles were recovered by A.Denis.

PRESERVATION: Fossickers have removed many ceramic and glass vessels, however (apart from fossickers) the area appears to have been undisturbed since Chinese occupation. Although there is some mining in the vicinity it is not likely to present a threat.

SOURCES: Oral - A. Denis (guide).

RECORD: Written observation.

SITE 26: LONG GEE'S CAMP, SOUTH MOUNT CAMERON

HISTORY: Long Gee was the last Chinese miner in this area. He lived to 97 years of age, dying 11 December 1939 a pauper (Gladstone Burial Book). His grave in the Gladstone cemetery is one of the many unmarked Chinese graves. A stone oven stood on this site until 1974 or 1975 but along with Long Gee's dwelling it has completely disappeared as a result of large scale tin mining in the area.

SIGNIFICANCE: This site has been completely destroyed by mining and is included as an example of the inevitable fate of many, perhaps most, of the Chinese tin mining sites in the Gladstone and Mount Cameron area.

SUB SITE:

LOCATION: Lanka 5845, G.R. 814595.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Gladstone.

ACCESS: On eastern side of Gladstone Road in the Allied Mine workings. The exact site was not located.

CLASSIFICATION: Miner's dwelling and pig oven.

DIMENSIONS:

LAND TENURE: Crown land controlled by the Department of Mines.

ENVIRONMENT: The site is located next to the Gladstone Road in the Allied Mine workings which cover several kilometres of the surrounding area. The Ringarooma River passes approximately 700m east of the site. The Allied Mine was active in the 1970s and is now a vast area of barren, eroding ground. Very little revegetation is occurring except on the edges of the mine near the roadside and the river.

RELICS: A Chinese stone and earth oven remained at the site in 1974-75 but has since been destroyed by mining. No other relics were located.

PRESERVATION: The site is completely destroyed.

SOURCES: Oral - A. Denis (guide).
Documentary - Gladstone Burial Book, Gladstone Council.

RECORD: Written description, photographs.

SITE 27: BLUE LAKE CAMP, MOUNT CAMERON

HISTORY: The area was first leased by J. Simpson and W. Stevens prior to 1885 but was soon taken up by Chinese and by 1890 the Clifton area was leased solely by Ah Wong, Chin Mon Tang and Wah Hong. This site (as far as can be established from mineral charts) was leased by Ah Wong from 1890-1903, the first and major Chinese lease holder in the area. The mineral charts of the period are difficult to match with modern maps as they do not include contours, roads, or full details of water courses and mining has changed the course of many creeks in the past century.

SIGNIFICANCE: This is a relatively well preserved example of a miner's dwelling site and of surrounding mine workings. Two other hut sites were located nearby and these are also in good condition (see sites 28 and 29). The location of this site, at a distance from major routes or settlements, is probably the reason for its preservation.

SUB SITE: See site 28 and 29.

LOCATION: Pioneer 5645, G.R. 786599.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Gladstone.

ACCESS: By car to the northern shore of Blue Lake stopping at the old power house. Walk 400m-500m due north to the site which is on the southern slopes of Mount Cameron.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 5 and 6 - Miner's dwelling and extensive mine workings.

DIMENSIONS: Hut size 2m X 3m.

LAND TENURE: Crown land.

ENVIRONMENT: Very open forest which receives regular burning, the main vegetation cover is Eucalyptus, Casuarinas, Banksias and a thin, low growth of bracken fern. The site has a gently sloping southerly aspect, being located on the slopes of Mount Cameron, overlooking Blue Lake. The area surrounding the site is covered by a network of water races, mine faces (1m - 3m deep), and tailing dumps. The Clifton Creek flows down the mountain less than 1km to the east of the site.

RELICS: Depressions of the wall of the hut and the chimney stones are visible. Scatters of pottery and glass shards were found within the surrounding area of about 5m X 7m. A shallow water race passed within 10m of the hut.

PRESERVATION: The site is in a relatively well preserved state with only surface fossicking apparent. Fire has probably been the main agent of destruction. No threats to the continued preservation of the site are foreseen other than the use of ploughs or bulldozers in the search for bottles, and this is unlikely given the remoteness of the site.

SOURCES: Oral - A. Denis (guide)

Documentary - Maps - Plan of Mineral Sections Mount Cameron, County of Dorset, 171-C, ?-1885; 171-d, 1885-1890; 171-e, 1890-1903.

RECORD: Written record (as above).



Plate 27: A fireplace at Blue Lake.

SITE 28: CLIFTON CAMP 1

HISTORY: Towards the end of the last century (c.1885-1905) the Clifton Creek was mainly leased by Chinese tin miners. Ah Wong held several leases along the creek (lease numbers 1018m, 337/87m, 336/87m, 340/87m) and Wah Hong (lease no. 204/93m) and Chin Mon Tang (1550/91m) held leases in the near vicinity. Mining leases, however, can only provide an indication of population distribution, as unrewarding areas were soon abandoned. Most miners worked in groups and (as in this case) where multiple leases were held by one miner, each lease was probably worked by miners on tribute to Ah Wong or in partnership with him.

SIGNIFICANCE: This dwelling site (one of three located on the slopes of Mount Cameron is representative of the life style of the majority of Chinese tin miners and due to its isolated setting, away from transport routes or human settlement, it has remained relatively undisturbed. The surrounding area is honeycombed with mine workings and water races and presents an excellent example of the Chinese method of alluvial tin mining.

SUB SITE: (see also site 27 and site 29).

LOCATION: Monarch 5646, G.R. 784607.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Gladstone.

ACCESS: From Blue Lake the site is accessed on foot by following the west bank of the Clifton Creek about 1km, to approximately 150m-200m south of the first fork in the creek. The site is about 100m-150m west of the creek on the steep east face of the large hill above Blue Lake and on the southern approach to Mount Camron.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 5 and 6 - Miner's dwelling site and mine workings.

DIMENSIONS: Hut size 2m X 4m. Area of scattered relics approximately 20m X 20m.

LAND TENURE: Crown land.

ENVIRONMENT: Situated on the east face of a steep hill on the southern approach to Mt Cameron, 100m west of the Clifton Creek the area is remote from centres of human settlement. Much of the surrounding area, on the southern foothills of Mt. Cameron near the Clifton Creek, was held under mineral leases by Chinese in the late 1800s and two other hut sites were located in the vicinity. The nearest Chinese settlement and transport routes are at South Mount Cameron, approximately 4km away. A network of small water races and mine faces cover the lower slopes of the hill increasing in density beside the creek. The hut site is located 10m below a small water race which parallels the creek and between 2 water races which run at right angles down to the creek. The area has received frequent burning and is very open forest, predominantly Casuarina, Banksia and Eucalypt with a thicket of burnt tea tree growing in a dry creek bed 150m north of the site.

RELICS: The chimney stones and depressions of three walls of the hut are clearly visible. Shards of glass and Chinese pottery and earthenware are scattered over an area of 20m X 20m. The square Dutch gin bottles and Chinese earthenware, rice wine and soy sauce jars predominate.

PRESERVATION: The site is relatively well preserved. Fossickers have retrieved surface relics with a small amount of digging concentrated in a small area (1m square) away from the hut. The main threats to the continued preservation of the site are further damage by fire and the use of bulldozers or ploughs by bottle collectors.

SOURCES: Oral - A. Denis (guide).

Documentary - Plan of Mineral Sections Mount Cameron County of Dorset, 171-d, 1885-1890 and 171-e, 1890-1903.

RECORD: Written observation, photographs.



water race

flat hut depression

chimney stone

Plate 28: Hut site at the Clifton.

SITE 29: CLIFTON CAMP 2, MOUNT CAMERONHISTORY: See site 28.SIGNIFICANCE: Similar to site 28 but the hut site is not clearly visible.

It is possible that the hut on this site was less solidly constructed, perhaps being a bark hut or a paling hut without a floor. The proximity and relationship between the miner's huts is of historical interest. Large quantities of cast-iron cooking pots found at the site would indicate more than one occupant, but this may be due to the site being occupied successively over several decades. Some of the relics may even have belonged to a more recent occupation by European miners but the quantities of Chinese earthenware and china fragments would suggest predominant, if not sole, Chinese occupation. This site appears to have been more heavily disturbed by bottle collectors than the neighbouring site 28.

SUB SITE: See site 27 and 28.LOCATION: Monarch 5646, G.R. 784605.MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Gladstone.ACCESS: As for site 28 but this site located approximately 150m-200m further south and the same distance above the Clifton Creek.CLASSIFICATION: Site type 5 and 6 - Miner's dwelling site and mine workings.DIMENSIONS: Pottery and glass shards distributed over an area of approximately 10m x 30m.LAND TENURE: Crown land.ENVIRONMENT: See site 28.RELICS: The ground is littered with shards of glazed earthenware and fine green china (Chinese bowls) and glass (particularly the square bottomed Dutch gin bottles). A large collection of cast-iron pots remains at the site and approximately 50 bottles (intact beer, gin and medicine bottles) and 4 Chinese, glazed, earthenware, rice wine jars have been removed from the site by Mr A. Denis.PRESERVATION: The site has been disturbed by fossickers and no clear impression of the hut was located. The area is currently disused and further threats are not likely other than damage by fire and use of bulldozers for unearthing bottles.SOURCES: Oral - A. Denis (guide).

Documentary - Plan of Mineral Section Mt Cameron County of Dorset, 171-d, 1885-1890 and 171-e, 1890-1903.

RECORD: Written observation and photographs.



Plate 29: Collection of cast iron cooking pots and Chinese earthenware fragments found at the Clifton Creek, Mt. Cameron.

SITE 30: AH COW'S OVEN, GLADSTONE

HISTORY: Ah Cow died at the age of 96 and was buried in Gladstone Cemetery on the 22/3/1921. The Gladstone Burial Book records his last place of abode as South Mt. Cameron. The oven is located approximately 1km from Ah Cow's garden (site 31). Chinese stone ovens were usually used for ceremonial purposes for the roasting of a whole pig.

SIGNIFICANCE: This is the only oven located in the Gladstone area. It is reasonable to assume that the site may have been a centre for the local Chinese and that buildings may have been located nearby which were not discovered by this survey. The Chinese population in the Gladstone area was probably sufficient to support a Joss House and gambling house and part of the population was stable, there being at least two market gardens in the area and one Chinese family who remained in the area for several generations (the Le Fook's). Further investigation may be fruitful as very little is known of the Gladstone Chinese.

SUB SITE: See also site 31, Ah Cow's Garden.

LOCATION: Gladstone 5846, G.R. 830639.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Gladstone.

ACCESS: A vehicular track (which is marked on the map) turns left off Waterhouse Road 1.6km from Gladstone. The track is no longer visible from the road as it leads across a paddock which has been ploughed and planted with turnips. Access is through a wire and post farm gate. Crossing the paddock in a south to south-easterly direction the track becomes more visible as it enters the bush at the edge. One km into the bush the track forks around a felled tree and rejoins. The oven is located 40m west of the point where the track rejoins, beside two large boulders (4m high).

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 3 - Chinese oven, ceremonial site.

DIMENSIONS: The oven is 135cm high x 3.3m wide. The diameter of the inner cylindrical chamber at the top of the oven is 1m and at the base 1.3m. The walls are 25cm thick at the top (single stone thickness) and 1m thick at the base.

LAND TENURE: Crown land, access via private property. Owner Mr T. Hazelwood, Springfield.

ENVIRONMENT: In forest, near the top of a steep, west facing slope which descends into Alhambra Creek. The predominant vegetation is peppermint gum, Banksia and Casuarina with a sparse ground cover of grass. A 5m-7m high Acacia grows out of the base of the oven and its lush green foliage is visible from the road.

RELICS: The stone and earth oven and some shallow water races are the only relics.

PRESERVATION: The oven is crumbling slightly at the top but is otherwise solid. The main threat to the structure is disturbance by an Acacia growing from its base.

SOURCES: Oral - T. Green (guide).

Documentary - Gladstone Burial Book, Gladstone Council.

RECORD: Written observation, measurements and photographs.



Plate 30: Photo of Ah Cow's oven $<252^{\circ}$, December 9, 1983.

SITE 31: AH COW'S GARDEN, GLADSTONE

HISTORY: There were two Chinese market gardens in Gladstone, each employing several people. The proximity of Ah Cow's garden and Ah Kaw's Creek and the similar sound of the names suggests that Ah Kaw and Ah Cow may have been the same person. The latter spelling was used in the Gladstone Burial Book and is the pronunciation used by local people and the former is the name of a well known Chinese entrepreneur (Chin Ah Kaw) of Launceston. It is therefore possible that the creek and garden were indeed named after different people, but as very few Chinese could write English their names were spelt phonetically and different interpretation of names must often have resulted.

SIGNIFICANCE: When mining died out the Chinese market gardeners were amongst the few of their nation to remain in Tasmania and make it their home. Most of Tasmania's Chinese are descended from these early miners and market gardeners. According to local sources Ah Cow's garden was still visible until 1981-1982, as a series of lush, green, flat plots on the side of a hill above Ah Kaw's Creek. These have since been destroyed by the cultivation of the paddock for turnips.

SUB SITE: See also site 30, Ah Cow's Oven.

LOCATION: Gladstone 5846, G.R. 837645.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Gladstone.

ACCESS: As for site 30. The site is accessed from Waterhouse Road, located on the east to southeast face of the paddock below a large gum tree which stands alone in the centre of the turnip field.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 7 - Market garden.

DIMENSIONS:

LAND TENURE: Privately owned by Mr T. Hazelwood, Springfield.

ENVIRONMENT: Situated on a terraced hillside with an easterly aspect, above a creek, within a coastal frost free area. The soil is a grey sandy loam of poor quality. The area of the garden has been roughly ploughed and planted with turnips which have now gone to seed. Surrounding the paddock, dry fire affected forest covers the southern hillsides and hugs the creek valleys. Located 1.5km from the western outskirts of Gladstone on the main route between Gladstone and Boobyalla Port.

RELICS: The garden terraces were clearly visible until 1981-82 but no trace remains since cultivation of the field.

PRESERVATION: Completely destroyed.

SOURCES: Oral - Mr T. and Mr G. Green.

Documentary - The Gladstone Burial Book, Gladstone Council.

RECORD: Written record, photographs.



Plate 31: Photo of site of Ah Cow's garden which survived until 1981-82 before being re-cultivated for turnips. December 10, 1983.

SITE 32: LEE AH FOOK'S HOUSE, GLADSTONE

HISTORY: The Lee Fook family was one of three Chinese families living in the north east and remained there for several generations. Lee Ah Fook was born in Canton in 1860 and arrived in Tasmania in 1878, on board the Mangana, he was naturalised five years later. Mrs Lee Fook came to Tasmania as Mrs Maa Mon Chinn's travelling companion and maid. She lived in Weldborough with the Chin Family for some time, later marrying Lee Fook and moving to Gladstone. The family were engaged in market gardening and hawking vegetables and groceries to miners in the surrounding area.

SIGNIFICANCE: This is one of three houses belonging to early Chinese which have survived to 1984. The house, which is over 100 years old, is well preserved and is still occupied. Built in the vernacular style of the times from weatherboard and corrugated iron with corrugated iron roof and a verandah along the length of the front. Part of the verandah has been enclosed and extended into a small room.

SUB SITE:

LOCATION: Gladstone 5846; G.R. 849648.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Gladstone.

ACCESS: Gladstone Road.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 9 - Dwelling.

DIMENSIONS: The house is approximately 8.5m X 5m and it stands on an 0.202ha block (half an acre).

LAND TENURE: Privately owned by R. Moore, Gladstone.

ENVIRONMENT: Located in the township on a half acre block with houses on either side.

RELICS: Small weatherboard house.

PRESERVATION: The original structure is intact with superficial changes such as enclosure of part of the verandah. The house is still occupied and appears to be under no immediate threat.

SOURCES: Oral - R. Moore (owner/occupier).

RECORD: Written observation, photographs.



Plate 32: Photo of front of Lee Fook's house taken from Gladstone Road, December 21, 1983.

SITE 33: GLADSTONE CEMETERY

HISTORY: Burial records for the cemetery record 23 Chinese burials between 1892 and 1915. Of these 4 were unnamed with only grave numbers assigned to them. Seven more were buried between 1917 and 1939, the last being Long Gee (see site 26) of South Mount Cameron died 11/2/1939, aged 97, who is described in the book as a pauper.

SIGNIFICANCE: This cemetery contains more marked Chinese graves (5) than any other in the North East. Two of the graves carry large and ornate tombstones. The site of an oven, described by a local source as being used by the Chinese for burning ceremonial papers during their funerals, (N. Petrie, personal communication) is marked by some crumbling bricks and alongside this a grave stone lies broken on the ground. This may have been part of a Chinese memorial similar to Weldborough and Moorina.

SUB SITE:

LOCATION: Gladstone 5846, G.R. 850659.

MUNICIPALITY: Ringarooma 59, WARD: Gladstone.

ACCESS: The Cape Portland Road from Gladstone, turn left to Gladstone tip 1km past the township, cemetery located on the left.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 8 - Cemetery.

DIMENSIONS: Approximately 72m X 72m.

LAND TENURE: Cemetery reserve.

ENVIRONMENT: On the northern outskirts of Gladstone township on gently sloping land. Three Chinese graves are situated in the back row, in a central position, facing west. European graves face east so that the Chinese graves are back to back with the European graves. The memorial is located in the next row (further west) in front of the graves. Two other Chinese graves are located approximately parallel but hard against the north fence, right away from all other graves. One of these Lee Tie's, has a large and ornate headstone and is surrounded by a bent iron fence.

RELICS: Five graves with headstones facing WSW and the site of a ceremonial oven and possibly a memorial stone.

1. Gee Tung, died May 22 1905, aged 78.
2. Lee Tie, died September 9 1909, aged 52.
3. Toy You, died May 13 1908, aged 75.
4. Chin Ah Hen, died June 26 1917, aged 82.
5. Sam Goon, died March 3 1918, aged 85.
6. A gravestone, resembling by inscription and style the memorial stones at Weldborough and Moorina, lies on the ground broken into 3 pieces. It is very worn and only the bold Chinese characters in the central column can be read. This lies in a flattened gravelly area 2.5m X 4m with the crumbled base of the oven in one corner.

PRESERVATION: Gee Tung's sandstone gravestone is broken in two across the centre and lies on the ground. Lee Tie's, Toy You's and Chin Ah Hen's stones are of a quartzite granite and are well preserved with most of the Chinese characters readable. These stones were engraved by J. Dunn. Sam Goon's gravestone still stands in place but is made from sandstone and is very worn, some of the writing being illegible. Destruction of the memorial and some graves may have occurred in c.1950 when an employee of the council "cleaned up" the cemetery with a tractor and rotary hoe destroying 2 rows of mostly Chinese graves.

SOURCES: Oral - Mr N. Petrie.

Documentary - The Gladstone Burial Book, Gladstone Council.

RECORD: Written observation and photographs.



Plate 33: Toy You's headstone in the Gladstone Cemetery.

Plate 34: Toy You's grave with broken Chinese gravestone in foreground, cemetery in background.



Plate 35: Three Chinese graves in back row of Gladstone Cemetery with oven site and broken gravestone in right foreground. Note Chin Ah Hen's and Sam Goon's gravestones are placed at the foot of the grave and all face in the opposite direction to European graves.

SITE 34: BLUE TIER

HISTORY: The Blue Tier was a major tin mining centre with several thriving townships at Poimena, Lottah and Goulds Country c.1870-1880. Many Chinese mined in the area but most of the history of the Chinese is confined to some sketchy memories of the two last miners on the Tier, Billy Bow and Ah Ling. However G. G. Bakhap of Lottah, stepfather of Thomas Jerome Bakhap a famous Tasmanian parliamentarian and diplomat, is a well remembered figure. He was a storekeeper and herbalist and his sons T. J. K. and S. P. Bakhap controlled several mineral leases on the Groom River near Lottah.

SIGNIFICANCE: This site is a poor example of the miner's dwelling as very little remains to indicate the size or style of the structure. An excavated bottle dump, which yielded a Chinese ceramic ginger jar and other fragments of Chinese pottery is the only evidence of a former habitation. This is unfortunate as the Blue Tier was inhabited earlier than the other mining centres surveyed in this study; also, the severe climate on top of the Tier, where winter snow falls and harsh winds were common, may have necessitated a variation of the humble paling hut and some differences in the lifestyle of these miners.

SUB SITE:

LOCATION: Blue Tier 5843, G.R. 835392.

MUNICIPALITY: Portland 58, WARD: North.

ACCESS: The road from Lottah to the Blue Tier is Four wheel drive only most of the year. The site is located 4.25km along this road from Lottah, 10m on the right, under a myrtle tree and within 3m of Crowther Creek.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 5 - Miner's dwelling.

DIMENSIONS: Undefinable, bottle dump approximately 1m X 1m.

LAND TENURE: State forest.

ENVIRONMENT: An open clearing on top of the Blue Tier covered with alpine mosses and sedges and surrounded by mixed forest. Some lone myrtles grow in the clearing remnants of the rainforest which once covered the Tier. The area is extensively gullied by mining, and small tailing dumps are disappearing under a cover of moss. Located beside the Poimena Road and near Crowther Creek.

RELICS: A bottle dump which has yielded a Chinese ceramic ginger jar, fragments of Chinese glazed earthenware and a V.C. Whisky bottle with side seam and hand applied neck.

PRESERVATION: The area has suffered clearing and severe fires and is now revegetated with a thick carpet of moss and sedges which obscures any depressions or relics left by previous habitation.

SOURCES: Oral - C. White and G. Mundy (taped interview); J. Stewart (guide).

RECORD: Written observation and photographs.



Plate 36: Billy Bow standing outside his hut on the Blue Tier. Photo supplied by Mr P. Burns, St Helens Local History Room.



Plate 37: Bottle dump on the Blue Tier.

SITE 35: JIMMY AH FOO'S, FINGAL

HISTORY: Jimmy Ah Foo was born in Canton on the 4 August 1867. He arrived in Launceston onboard the Flinders on 15th April 1887. Naturalised on 8 August 1892 he gave his occupation as a gardener (File No. 1563, CSD 16/Vol. 49). He was a successful market gardener and herbalist who appears to have maintained two homes and two gardens, one in Fingal and another in Mathinna. He travelled in a horse drawn, covered spring dray selling his vegetables and medicines throughout the district. Ravens were apparently highly sought after by the Chinaman who paid the equivalent to the price of a chicken for one of these birds which he used in the preparation of treatments for a variety of maladies, from lack of appetite to swollen limbs and conjunctivitis (Cox, C.; Lee, L. and Johns, C. personal communication).

SIGNIFICANCE: His home in Fingal is very well preserved and although it has been altered by the addition of several rooms the original cottage remains intact. This is the best preserved example of a Chinese residence and was occupied by "Jimmy the Chinaman" until at least 1925.

SUB SITE: See also site 31, Jimmy Ah Foo's, Mathinna.

LOCATION: On the 1: 250 000 Northeast Tas Map, first edition 1980, G. R. 581390.

MUNICIPALITY: Fingal, within Fingal town boundaries.

ACCESS: On Fingal Valley Road, the last house on the eastern outskirts of the town.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 7 and 9 - Dwelling and market garden.

DIMENSIONS:

LAND TENURE: Privately owned and occupied by Mr C. Johns.

ENVIRONMENT: On the eastern outskirts of Fingal township fronting onto the Highway with the back garden extending to the Fingal Rivulet.

RELICS: A small weatherboard cottage with verandah on the front and corrugated iron roof. Extensions have been built on the eastern side of the cottage and on the back and some internal walls removed. The garden has been landscaped and no sign of the market garden remains.

PRESERVATION: The weatherboard cottage is in very good condition. The present occupants have built some extensions onto the cottage but the original structure survives and is not likely to be altered.

SOURCES: Oral - C. Johns (owner and occupier).
Documentary - Naturalisation file No. 1563, CSD 16/Vol. 49.

RECORD: Written observation and photographs.



Plate 38: Jimmy Ah Foo's house at Fingal taken from highway.

SITE 36: JIMMY AH FOO'S HOUSE, MATHINNA

HISTORY: Jimmy Ah Foo had a residence and market garden in Fingal and Mathinna and he apparently divided his time equally between each place. (See site 35). The site of his residence in Mathinna is somewhat uncertain as several local sources place it on the corner of Dunn Street and George Street but an old town plan, dated 1926, and a property survey of 1896 show James Ah Foo as the owner of a house block on the corner of Dunn Street and High Street. Local sources were questioned separately on this point but had no doubt as to the location of "Jimmy the Chinaman" (Ah Foo) dwelling (Cox, C.; Lee, L. and Lee, A.). As these local sources had visited Ah Foo at his home in their late teens and early twenties, and one has since purchased the property, it is unlikely that they would be mistaken on this point. It is therefore assumed that Ah Foo lived in Dunn Street and not at his property in High Street. The house in Dunn Street was demolished in 1970-72 and nothing now remains.

SIGNIFICANCE: Jimmy Ah Foo appears to have been a highly successful gardener, herbalist and businessman. Remaining in the area after the mining boom had abated he traded largely with Europeans and acted as a doctor to many. This site is one of only two Chinese sites located in Mathinna township, which once had a large population of Chinese miners.

SUB SITE: See site 35.

LOCATION: On 1:100 000 Tasmanian Topographic Map, Forester 8415, Edition 2, 1979, G.R. 740074.

MUNICIPALITY: Fingal, WARD: Tower Hill.

ACCESS: Corner of Dunn and George Street (or Dunn and High Street), Mathinna.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 9 - Dwelling or dwellings.

DIMENSIONS: George Street property - 13.8m X 34.6m (1926). High Street property - 9.5m X 34.6, buildings 7.9m X 3.9m and 3m X 6.7m).

LAND TENURE: George Street property is privately owned by L. Lee, Mathinna.

ENVIRONMENT: Located within one block of the post office between the High Street and the alluvial plain of the South Esk River, which was the scene of the Mathinna gold rush.

RELICS: The house, which was weatherboard, lined with scrim and paper and had a corrugated iron roof, was pulled down in 1970-1972. All that remains are some bricks from the Chimney.

PRESERVATION: Demolished in 1970-1972.

SOURCES: Oral - AL. Lee, L. Lee, C. Cox.

Documentary - Mathinna Town Plan M7, 1926; Lands Department Survey Book E4, 1896, page 6. Lands Department, Hobart.

RECORD: Written observation, photographs.



Plate 39: Site of Jimmy Ah Foo's house showing chimney butt in the foreground and Mathinna township in the background. $< 90^{\circ}$ taken from George Street, October 29, 1983.

SITE 37: WONG HEE'S SHOP, MATHINNA

HISTORY: The Mathinna gold fields were discovered in 1855 but were shortly abandoned, going through minor fluctuations until interest revived in 1877. In the late 1880s and early 1900s Mathinna had three pubs and three football teams, it is now a near ghost town which has survived due to agriculture and forestry. Built beside the gold rich, alluvial flats of the South Esk River, the town commanded a full panorama of "White City", the name given to the flat when it was white with the canvas tents of hopeful miners among them hundreds of Chinese. Unlike the European miners the Chinese preferred huts to tents and built one room, split paling shelters, approximately 2m X 3.2m, which were known as "Chinese dungeons". Many Chinese flocked to the area during the early gold rush days. Chinese miners mainly worked shallow alluvial diggings and were gradually deposed from the area as mining was taken over by large, mechanical companies. Some Chinese worked on the larger mines such as the City of Hobart. Mines were gradually worked out and most of the miners had left the flat by 1910 but Wong Hee and his Chinese partner continued to run their general store until the mid 1920s supplying groceries and draperies to the remaining townsfolk. The store remained open for decades after their departure, changing hands several times, but the signboard above the shop was never repainted and proclaimed the premises as "Wong Hee's" until 1983 when the building was repainted by its current owners.

SIGNIFICANCE: This is the only Chinese shop in the North East which has survived to 1984. The building is in excellent condition and extensions to the original structure have not altered the shop. As such it is a unique and well preserved reminder of an era when Chinese and European miners opened up the North East in their search for gold and tin.

SUB SITE:

LOCATION: 1:100 000 Tasmanian Topographic, Forester 8415, 2nd Edition 1979; G.R. 741074.

MUNICIPALITY: Fingal. WARD: Tower Hill.

ACCESS: On the left of High Street, Mathinna (from Fingal). The third property before Butler Street.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 10 - Shop and dwelling.

DIMENSIONS: A survey of the property made in 1901 has the dimensions 13.8m X 34.6m, the store is 7.7m X 4.7m and a stable on the back of the block is 2.7m X 9.5m.

LAND TENURE: Private property, owned and occupied by Mr J. Shean, High Street, Mathinna.

ENVIRONMENT: Located in a central position on the east side of the main street of the township of Mathinna, once a thriving gold rush town.

RELICS: Shop building with dwelling built on to the back.

PRESERVATION: The building is no longer a shop but is still occupied and is in very good condition. Extensions built by more recent proprietors have not altered the original shop structure.

SOURCES: Oral - Mr C. Cox, Mr A. Lee.

Documentary - Anon, No date, Mathinna, Queen Victoria Museum archive file.

RECORD: Written observation and photographs.

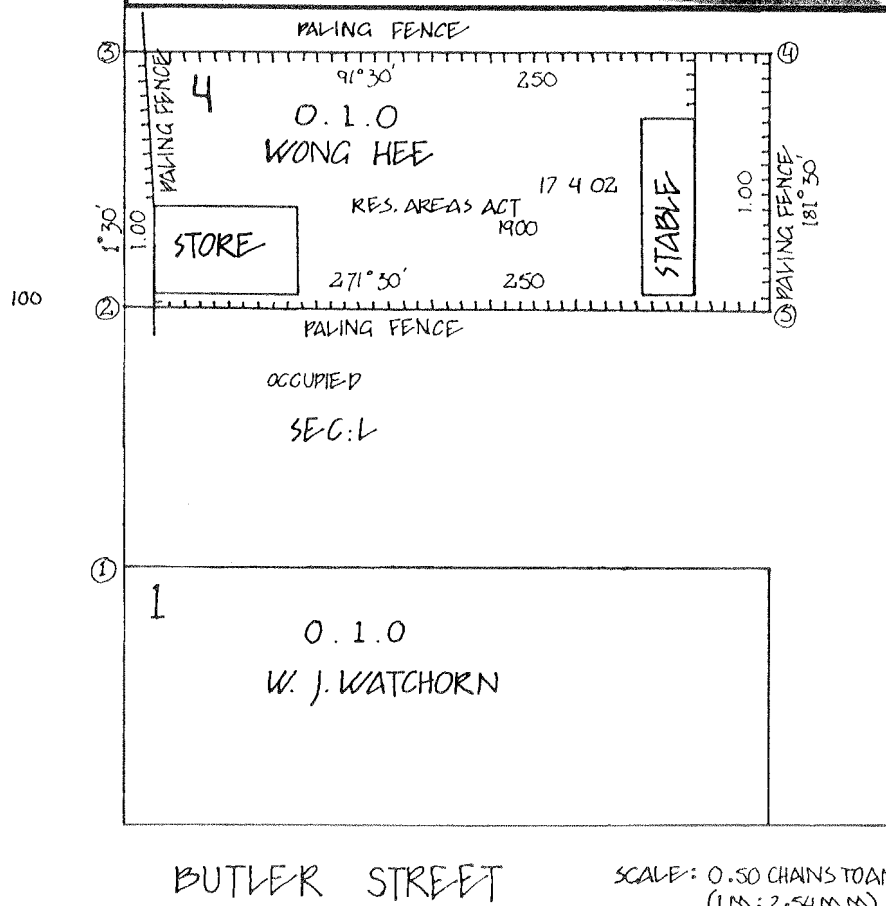


Figure 10: Drawing taken from survey diagram of Wong Hee's property, Mathinna, made December 21, 1901, taken from Lands Department Survey Book F8/19.

Plate 40: Wong Hee's shop, Mathinna. Photo taken from point A on survey.

SITE 38: CHINESE MARKET GARDEN, MATHINNA

HISTORY: Market gardening was the second most common occupation of the Chinese in Tasmania (after mining). It seems to have been the province of the wealthier Chinese, usually those who did well enough from mining to raise the capital to buy land. With a large population of miners and expensive and inefficient transportation they had a guaranteed market and this together with their great skill as gardeners and long hours of work brought them much success. Chinese gardens were set out in small raised beds of irregular shapes, perhaps determined by the contours of the land, but always small enough to be worked from the edges and kept meticulously free of weeds.

SIGNIFICANCE: When mining ceased to be profitable and the Chinese population dwindled through migration and death the ones who remained and made this country their home were mainly engaged in gardening. This garden is situated on prime river flat and employed about 12 people, including several Europeans. The site has been developed for pasture in recent years and no sign of the garden was found.

SUB SITE:

LOCATION: 1:100 000 Topographic, Forester 8415, 2nd edition 1979: G.R. 740095.

MUNICIPALITY: Fingal. WARD: Tower Hill.

ACCESS: Located 1km from Mathinna on the confluence of Dans Rivulet and the South Esk River, opposite Chinaman's Hill. Accessed by Eton Road.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 7 - Market garden.

DIMENSIONS: The size of the garden is not known precisely but the dimensions of the flat between Chinaman's Hill and Dans Rivulet, where the garden was located, are approximately 100m X 250m.

LAND TENURE: Privately owned.

ENVIRONMENT: Situated on a narrow river flat at the confluence of Dans Rivulet and the South Esk River. Chinaman's Hill rises sharply on the Western edge of the flat which is bordered by Eton Road on the West and Dans Rivulet on the east and south. The area is now a developed pasture used for grazing sheep.

RELICS: Flat paddock identified as garden site by 2 local, first hand sources (Mr A. Lee and Mr C. Cox).

PRESERVATION: The paddock was walked but no sign of the garden was found.

SOURCES: Oral - A. Lee, C. Cox.

RECORD: Written observation and photograph.



Chinese Market Garden, Mathinna.

Plate 41: Site of Chinese market garden. $< 90^{\circ}$ taken October 29, 1983.

SITE 39: LEFROY CHINESE CAMP

HISTORY: Lefroy was one of the earliest centres of Chinese mining in Tasmania. Gold was discovered in 1869 and Lefroy was already a thriving township by 1870 with 3 hotels, several shops and a Post Office. Lefroy's fortunes fluctuated dramatically, as did its population, with high points occurring in 1870, early 1874, late 1876-1877 and 1891. Chinese miners were quick to arrive and were reported as having moderate success in the Examiner 3/10/1872. In 1873 during a slump Chinese dominated the mining numbering 65 out of the town's 100 miners and in September of 1874 a Joss House was erected. By November 1876, after a period of decline, the town's population was 350, with 40 Chinese who had their own Joss House and gambling salon. A mining boom in 1877 brought an influx of population and new businesses to Lefroy and the Chinese community built a larger and more elaborate Joss House. The Chinese built a cluster of 15 small huts on crown land in an encampment near the centre of Lefroy. European cottages occupied neighbouring lots in Powell Street.

SIGNIFICANCE: This was one of the first Chinese camps established in the northeast and the site remains in a relatively undisturbed condition. It is interesting to note Chinese and European dwellings in the same street, as in other camps (Weldborough, Garibaldi) the Chinese and Europeans isolated themselves to varying degrees.

SUB SITE: Site 40, Lefroy Joss House.

LOCATION: Tasmania 1:250 000, North East, First ed. 1980, Lands Department, Hobart: G.R. 499450.

MUNICIPALITY: George Town. WARD: Lefroy.

ACCESS: Corner of Shaw Street and Powell Street, Lefroy.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 1 - Chinese camp, religious site.

DIMENSIONS: Total area 90 square metres.

LAND TENURE: Privately owned by D. W. Crawford, Powell Street, Lefroy.

ENVIRONMENT: Situated near the town centre between Powell Street and an old tramline which follows the fenceline of the property. Some houses still survive in Powell Street but the site of the Chinese camp is a disused paddock bordered by Powell Street on the east, Shaw Street on the south, a tramline on the west and occupied house and garden on the north. The ground is disturbed and hummocky with some flat areas which may have been hut sites. A small thicket of tea tree and a hawthorn bush are the only shrubs most of the area being covered by grass and blackberries.

RELICS: The area shows signs of human habitation in the form of disturbed, hummocky ground and shallow water races, 10-15cm deep, and some flattened areas but no definite hut sites were located.

PRESERVATION: A group of 3 Chinese hut sites situated on the south west corner may have been destroyed by construction of a roadside drain. This area was covered by a thick growth of blackberries which excluded access. The site does not appear to have been disturbed except by burning but future cultivation is possible and is the most serious threat.

SOURCES: Oral - Mr F. Maclean, Mr B. Gibbons
Documentary - Field Book No. 1154, 11/4/1993, Lands Department, Hobart. Town Plan, Lefroy 14, No date, Lands Department, Hobart. Examiner 18/11/1877, 21/7/1877, 3/10/1872.

RECORD: Written observation, photographs, oral history.

SITE 40: LEFROY JOSS HOUSE

HISTORY: This may have been the first Joss House to be built in the North East. Erected in 1874 by a population of approximately 65 Chinese gold miners who had been resident in the area from 2-4 years. Three years later as the population increased and during a period of prosperity a larger and more elaborate Joss House was built and this was opened with a 24 hour celebration of feasting, fireworks and gambling. The building is described as weatherboard with iron roof. It faced away from the street and was surrounded by fruit trees. The entrance was guarded by 2 stone lions and inside the wood lined walls were painted bright pink. The Joss House was in use for at least 30 years with the remaining half dozen Chinese, mainly market gardeners, continuing their ceremonies into the early 1900s (B. Gibbons, personal communication). At some stage c.1904 the Joss House was dismantled and its contents removed to an unknown destination.

SIGNIFICANCE: As the first known Joss House erected in the North East this site is important as its existence may have influenced the erection of other Joss Houses at Garibaldi, Weldborough or Branhholm. Some or all of the contents from this Joss House may have been donated to other later Joss Houses, eventually becoming part of the collection now held by the Queen Victoria Museum in Launceston.

SUB SITE: See site 39, Lefroy Chinese Camp.

LOCATION: See site 39.

MUNICIPALITY: George Town. WARD: Lefroy.

ACCESS: Powell Street, Lefroy, in northeastern quarter of paddock near to house.

CLASSIFICATION: Site type 2 - Joss House, religious site.

DIMENSIONS: From local information regarding location the Joss House has been placed on an 1883 town plan. If this information is correct the Joss House is the largest building in the camp being approximately 18.7m X 12m, including a verandah 2m wide along the front. Buildings on the plan are sketchily drawn and may not be precisely to scale.

LAND TENURE: Privately owned by D. W. Crawford, Powell Street, Lefroy.

ENVIRONMENT: See site 38. The Joss House was positioned 2m from Powell Street facing west-southwest (away from the street). Fruit trees grew in its grounds.

RELICS: Nothing remains on the surface, but some of the contents of the Joss House may have been taken by departing Chinese to other camps such as Weldborough or Garibaldi.

PRESERVATION: No structures or relics remain on the surface.

SOURCES: Oral - B. Gibbons, (taped interview) and F. Maclean.
Documentary - Examiner 1/9/1874, 18/11/1876, 21/7/1877, Lands Department Field Book 1154, Town Plan Lefroy L/14 (1883), Lands Department, Hobart.

RECORD: Written observation, photographs, oral history.

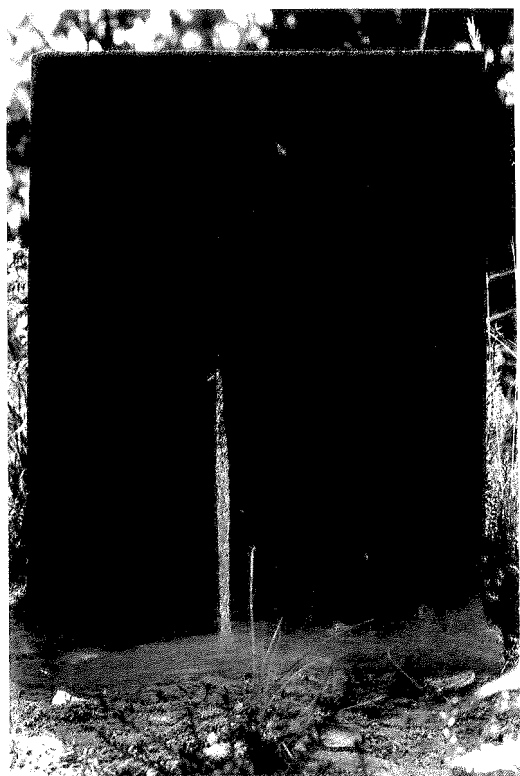


Plate 42: Ke Mon's headstone close-up.



Plate 43: Ke Mon's grave in the Lefroy Cemetery.

SITE 41: LEFROY CEMETERY

HSITORY: Many Chinese were buried at Lefroy but only one marked grave remains. Standing alone in the north east corner of the cemetery, away from the European graves, the grave of Ke Mon is a simple earth mound with a sandstone headstone placed at the head of the grave facing west. The gravestone bears an inscription in English stating "Ke Mon, Died January 11 1881, Aged 31" and three rows of Chinese characters.

SIGNIFICANCE: This is the only structural relic of the Chinese gold miners at Lefroy, who outnumbered the European miners in 1873.

SUB SITE: See site 39 and 40.

LOCATION: See site 39.

MUNICIPALITY: George Town. WARD: Lefroy.

ACCESS: Via Percy Street, Lefroy.

CLASSIFICATION: Cemetery.

DIMENSIONS:

LAND TENURE: Cemetery reserve.

ENVIRONMENT: Situated on the north eastern edge of the town on the brow of a small hill.

RELICS: One marked grave with sandstone headstone bearing an English inscription and Chinese characters. There are many unmarked graves.

PRESERVATION: The cemetery is well maintained and the grave kept fairly free of weeds. The headstone is planted in the soft earth mound of the grave and is not very secure. The stone has weathered considerably and some of the Chinese characters are becoming faint but all are still readable.

SOURCES: Oral - Mr F. Maclean (caretaker).

RECORD: Written observation, photographs.

4. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHINESE SITES IN THE NORTH EAST TO TASMANIA'S CULTURAL HERITAGE

4.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CHINESE IN NORTH EAST TASMANIA

The significance of the sites recorded by this survey is inextricably tied to the importance of the Chinese in the region. In considering this question the lack of recorded historical information on the Chinese becomes immediately apparent.

It is the very lack of information which becomes a major reason for preservation of the sites as a clue to the history of the Chinese. In the words of the eminent British historian, W. Hoskins "the (human) landscape itself, to those who know how to read it aright, is the richest historical record we possess".¹

Most Tasmanians could be easily forgiven for denying any presence of Chinese in 19th century Tasmania. Tasmanian history is presented as a highly homogenised European history with little reference to the Tasmanian Aborigines and virtually none to the Chinese contained in historical texts. As a result of this omission researching the history of the Chinese in Tasmania is a lengthy task requiring searches through early newspapers and mines reports to glean mainly anecdotal accounts of the Chinese.

However, it is clear from an examination of the mining records, that the Chinese played a very major role in the development of the North East region and contributed a great deal to the Tasmanian economy as a whole.

The history of the Tasmanian Chinese is closely linked with the history of the North East tin mines. Alluvial tin mining was the main industry in the North East during the 1880 s, accounting for approximately one eighth of Tasmania's total export earnings (a further eighth was produced by the Mt. Bischoff tin mine in the North West). The development of this industry relied greatly on Chinese labour and for over a decade the Chinese outnumbered Europeans on the tinfields of the North East.

Tasmanian Chinese did not experience the horrors of racial violence which erupted in Victoria and New South Wales in the 1860's, but their presence on the tinfields was not without incidence. Most of the antagonism was based on economic competition.

Many letters to the editor during the early 1880 s express the discontent of European miners who complained of the Chinese reducing their standard of living by undercutting Europeans and working for lower wages.² However, strictly speaking, wages were not usually paid to the Chinese. Most alluvial mines during this period were worked on the tribute system, that is, the miners kept a percentage of their production or received a wage in proportion to the amount mined, the remainder going to the lessee who was usually absent. There was competition for each lease with the contract going to the lowest bidder, i.e. the group willing to work for the smallest percentage.³

How the Chinese were able to survive on incomes below those

acceptable to Europeans is uncertain. It may have been that they were more frugal and, having come from a country where extreme poverty was widespread and famines had become a regular occurrence, were willing to accept a lower standard of living. Whilst most did not have wives and families to support in Tasmania 39% were married and supporting extended families in China.⁴ It is unlikely that their food costs were much less than Europeans as it appears that many food items were imported from China. In addition most had borrowed their passage money to Australia from clan members already in Australia and were obliged to make repayments (commonly by working for their creditors for periods of several years for minimal pay).⁵

Another possibility is that they were more productive. Many were experienced alluvial miners having worked on the gold fields in Victoria, New South Wales and New Zealand and this may have given them an advantage over local miners. The archaeological record may illuminate some of these mysteries.

In all likelihood a major reason for their persistence on the tin fields when European miners were leaving in droves is that their financial obligations to clan in China and to repay their passage compelled them to obtain work wherever it was possible. This country would have offered very little refuge for unemployed Chinese at that time and they suffered the additional insecurity of separation from their families and unfamiliar, sometimes hostile, surroundings.

The Chinese presence contributed to the development of the region in many ways. They provided a continuity of population and a ready market for local farmers. They extracted wealth from ground considered unremunerative by Europeans. They ensured a steady production of tin which must have influenced Government decisions to invest in improved transportation (roads and railways) for the area. They also added a dimension to the cultural climate of the area which has never since been equalled: who could imagine a Chinese Opera playing in North East Tasmania today!

It is likely that the Chinese were directly responsible for some discoveries of tin and gold deposits, and perhaps for some of the transportation routes still in use today.

The miners were also important to the prosperity of the Launceston Chinese community, particularly the merchants who kept them supplied with Chinese goods. Although many miners who had the means left Tasmania when mining ceased to be profitable or they became too old to mine, some stayed, joining the Launceston community. They took up jobs in Chinese laundries, restaurants, fruit and vegetable shops or market gardens. Some, particularly those that married European women, remained in the North East where many of their descendants still live today. The Tasmanian Chinese community of the 1980 s has its roots in the early pioneer miners of the 1880 s.

4.2 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SITES

The Australian Heritage Commission Act, 1975 defines cultural

significance as those places being components of the cultural environment that have aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present or future generations.⁸

The selection of criteria for evaluating significance has been a topic of much discussion amongst archaeologists throughout Australia in the past decade. Unfortunately, little progress has been made and the statement of significance remains a matter for individual interpretation as no explicit historical themes have been developed in Australia to aid this process and priorities for recording programmes (well established overseas) have not been set.⁹

It is important to draw a distinction between evaluation for conservation of significant cultural information and the evaluation for conservation of significant cultural fabric, as the criteria for significance are different. In considering conservation of significant cultural information it is not 'the completeness or visual quality of the visible remains as exemplars for community enlightenment or enjoyment which is at issue but rather the quality of the contribution which the surviving evidence can make to historical or technical knowledge'.¹⁰

Judy Birmingham stresses the need for clarification of objectives and development of historical themes in her paper on Analysis of Cultural Significance for Industrial Sites;

"the specific areas of historical and/or technical knowledge to be advanced need to be rigorously and explicitly defined in advance, first in order that the site can be assessed to see whether it can yield significant information, secondly in order that the collecting or recording procedures on individual sites can be designed specifically to achieve them... broadly-based historical research objectives... are still notably absent, although historical archaeologists have made a start. Physical evidence, for example, can contribute considerably to such major areas as labour relations, ethnic traditions, environmental challenge and human social behaviour. The formulation of state industrial historical research plans based on a compilation of the technical interest areas of each specific discipline, together with broader historical and behavioural topics, is critical to assessing priorities in the collection of significant cultural information".¹¹

In the absence of defined State objectives guidelines for the evaluation of significance have been applied in this report, using criteria outlined by Isabel McBryde¹² which have received general agreement. It is useful to list these in summary here:

- a) The importance of the site in illuminating or illustrating the past; i.e. its value in providing material evidence for the reconstruction of the past (including aspects of social, economic and technological history not recorded in historical literature), or its value in terms of material documentation of the recorded past.
- b) The educational value of the site and the role it could play in school, university or public education.

- c) The association of the site with historic events or individuals.
- d) The emotive and associational value of the site.
- e) The age or scarcity of a site or its value as an exemplar.
- f) The extent to which a site is in danger of damage or destruction.

These criteria are selective and qualitative and the responsibility for making a selection is a heavy one. This study is a preliminary survey of some of the surface relics of the Chinese in North East Tasmania. No archaeological study, even of the most cursory nature, has taken place and detailed historical research is required to understand the context of these sites, so that any evaluation of significance at this stage can only be of a general nature and to some degree is speculative with regard to the contents of any or all of the sites.

Sites may contain, on closer examination, a wealth of information, which may illuminate a number of aspects of lifestyles, for example:

- i) the proportion of Chinese versus local goods consumed by the miners,
- ii) anything uniquely Chinese in their method of mining,
- iii) whether Chinese mining methods influenced the European miners or vice-versa,
- iv) whether they established themselves on existing transportation routes or cut their own, and to what extent existing transportation routes may have been established by Chinese,
- v) the security of miners who worked in isolation and the degree of harassment they received may be illumined by the existence (or otherwise) of locks on hut doors or defensive weapons (knives or guns) at the site.

However, it is equally possible that little or no such evidence exists at many sites due to destruction by fire or redevelopment, and selective removal of relics by fossickers. It is impossible to make a judgment on this based on anything but surface evidence at this stage, which is inclined to favour larger sites where quantities of relics are naturally higher, but disturbance may also be greater. For this reason relative rating of sites has been avoided in the actual record and is included here only where it bears directly on issues of short term preservation.

Taken as a whole the sites can be considered highly significant with regard to criteria (a) and (b), in that:

1. With further investigation they almost certainly will illuminate aspects of social economic and technological history not recorded in historical literature.

2. They illustrate the presence of the early Chinese pioneer miners serving as almost sole reminders of that era of Tasmanian history.
3. The educational value of the sites is diminished by the lack of remaining structures. This means careful observation is required to illustrate the social, technological and economic aspects of their lifestyle. However, with close examination and some interpretation aspects of the relationship of the domicile to the work environment, the method of mining, and Chinese social organisation and inter-relationship with Europeans became apparent. That the sites are of interest to school groups (even without any interpretation) is demonstrable by the occurrence of regular visits by a group from Scottsdale High School to the Garibaldi site in recent years.¹³ The sites are also of indisputable value to historians, archaeologists and history students, interested in recording the currently unwritten history of the Chinese in Tasmania.¹⁴

The sites are also highly significant in terms of criteria (e) and (f), i.e. the ability to illuminate the past and their educational value, in that:

4. The sites are not precisely datable in all cases but are mostly between 80-100 years old. The age of a site is a non-qualitative criteria which in many places is sufficient to rate a site as historically significant. For example, in Sweden¹⁵ and New Zealand¹⁶ all archaeological sites (defined as any place associated with human activity over 100 years old) are protected as part of the country's heritage. In Western Australia under the Maritime Archaeology Act¹⁷ all shipwrecks predating 1900 are considered significant.
5. The scarcity of the sites and their value as exemplars is difficult to determine on the basis of a preliminary survey alone, as the proportion of total sites covered by the survey is not known. However, if qualitative criteria, such as the condition of sites and their environs, are considered, it is likely that good examples of each type of site (miner's dwelling, mine site, shop, mining encampment, dwelling, memorial, township, cemetery, Joss house, garden, pig oven) would be very rare, and in terms of those identified by this study this is certainly the case.

6. The threat of damage or destruction of these sites is all too evident with no sites appearing to have escaped some degree of damage from at least one of the three major continuing threats, fossicking, forestry and mining. Most sites have suffered total destruction by fire of all flammable material. The threat to cemeteries (graves and monuments) of destruction by neglect is very serious and wilful destruction of Chinese graves has already occurred on a large scale in at least one cemetery in the North East (Gladstone, see site 33).

By these criteria alone a very strong argument exists for the classification and protection of these sites. Points (c) and (d) of the criteria for evaluating significance are considered less relevant by this study and generally there is a feeling amongst archaeologists and historians that classification of sites on the basis of association with 'historic events and individuals' perpetuates an elitist and biased view of history which is no longer felt to be historically appropriate. The definition of an 'historic person or event' is also open to interpretation, and in terms of the regional history or the history of the Tasmanian Chinese, several characters, hitherto ignored by historians, could be claimed to be very important in the economic and social development of the region. For example Maa Mon Chin of Weldborough owned several properties in the township of Weldborough and Garibaldi, employed large numbers of Chinese on his extensive mineral leases, was a respected member of the local business community and was the head of the Chinese community acting as a benefactor and advisor. It is said that the governor of Tasmania called on him when he was touring the district. Maa Mon Chin's wife was also an important figure organising many cultural events, such as the New Year celebrations, and integrating well into the European community. Her style and grace were much admired and it is said that her presence added prestige to social occasions.¹⁸

Ah Moy of Branxholm filled a similar position at a more local level. Also a miner and shopowner he was responsible for the distribution of goods from Moorina (the distribution centre of that time) to Garibaldi, Weldborough and the Cascades, using a team of horses. He brought a Chinese wife from China and the family prospered and integrated well with the European community at Branxholm. Ah Moy was instrumental in founding the Joss house at Branxholm.¹⁹

Many other memorable figures exist, such as Ah Choon, a storekeeper and miner in the Cascades. He is said to have raised pigs in a concrete floored compound in the early 1900 s.²⁰ He is remembered also for his generosity towards local children, giving them all a free ticket to the Cinema as a parting gift.²¹

However, it is the history of the majority of miners which is of greatest interest. The lifestyle of individuals struggling for a profit in very difficult economic times. These are the people whose lives have gone unrecorded and about whom the historical sites are likely to be the best record available.

The emotive and associational value of a site (point d, page 111) is probably the most obscure of the criteria for evaluating cultural significance, but for the descendants of the Chinese (whether they reside in Tasmania or elsewhere) the cemeteries and graves of their ancestors are traditionally of great significance. Whilst ancestor worship may no longer be actively practised, respect for the ancestors is traditionally tied to the place of burial. In China in the early 1900s the ancestral burial ground was a mechanism for obtaining property rights or maintaining ownership of land. This was so important to the Chinese of this period that all who were able returned to China to die or arranged for relatives to send their bones to China for burial in the ancestral grounds. Each year a festival of the dead is held in the Launceston cemetery to honour the ancestors.

4.3 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Chinese played an important role in the early development and settlement of the North East. They comprise a significant ethnic group which has been largely overlooked by Tasmanian historians. The sites are likely, through archaeological investigation, to provide evidence which would not be otherwise available as to the exploration of the North East, development of tin mining, integration with the European communities, social organisation of the Chinese, trade with Launceston, Melbourne and China, cultural traditions and transmission (including technological), cultural adaptation, and transport and communication systems.

The sites can serve an educational function at secondary and tertiary level. All site types (with the exception of mining sites and possibly miners dwellings) are scarce and are in danger of damage. Structural relics such as the monuments, graves and pig ovens are very rare and in danger of destruction through weathering and neglect.

4.4 PRIORITIES FOR PRESERVATION

With the information available some sites appear particularly worthy of preservation either purely on their own merits or because of imminent danger of destruction. A strong argument could be made for at least short term preservation of all sites to permit further investigation and evaluation. However, as no mechanism currently exists in Tasmania to expedite such measures selective preservation may be more workable.

It is not possible to rate sites accurately based on the scant information and superficial examination provided by this survey. Ratings should be regarded as a guide only and should be revised as new information becomes available.

The first priority would be to preserve at least one example of each site type and in some cases more than one.

SITE TYPE 1 - Chinese Townships:

Three definite townships have been identified, Weldborough, Garibaldi, Lefroy and two much smaller and less definite townships at South Mount Cameron (the existence of a shop has not been definitely established at this site), and Ruby Flat (a shop was present on the Flat but the distribution

of dwellings around the shop is not known).

Of these, Garibaldi is particularly worthy of preservation because of the imminent danger of destruction from fossickers and the presence on the site of three of the six pig ovens located by this survey. However, Weldborough was the largest Chinese camp being the centre of the entire North East Chinese community and was the site of the Joss house collection in the Queen Victoria Museum. Lefroy was one of the earliest townships and the site may illuminate time series aspects of cultural adaptations and transmissions and integration resulting from contact with European communities. It is, for example, notable that the spatial separation between the Chinese and European areas in Lefroy does not appear as marked as it was at Weldborough, Branhholm, South Mount Cameron and Garibaldi, respectively, each of which developed increasingly isolated Chinese areas. However, it is not possible to determine the reason for this or even the precise sequence of events at this stage. Both these sites are therefore worthy of preservation for their information value.

SITE TYPE 2 - Joss Houses:

Joss House sites have been located at Weldborough, Branhholm, Lefroy and less precisely at Garibaldi but these were probably not the only Joss houses in the North East. For example, there is said to have been a Joss house at Gladstone but this could not be authenticated.²² Many Chinese had their own Joss in their homes and a community Joss existed in a private dwelling in Branhholm prior to the erection of the Joss house.²³

The Weldborough Joss house site is probably the most worthy of preservation, being the longest established, probably most elaborate and most important to the community, as Weldborough was the main centre for events such as the Chinese New Year in which the Joss house was central. The site is also important as the source of the Launceston Museum collection.

Lefroy is possibly next in importance, being the first Joss house and therefore possibly the source of many of the ceremonial items housed at later dates by Joss houses such as Weldborough, Garibaldi and Branhholm. Joss house sites are also important as the cultural focus of each of those communities. Furthermore, it is likely that a fuller understanding of the role of the Joss house can be obtained from study of a broad sample rather than one outstanding example.

A strong case exists for preservation of all Joss house sites for their information value.

SITE TYPE 3 - Chinese Pig Ovens:

Six pig ovens have been located by this study, 3 at Garibaldi, 1 at Ah Gar's near the Wyniford River, 1 at the Argus and 1 at Gladstone. These are the only surviving structures on Chinese settlement sites and as rarities all warrant preservation as culturally significant fabric, as they serve to illustrate the culture which created them. Ah Gar's oven is smaller than the others but is the best preserved.

SITE TYPE 4 - Mining Encampments:

The Argus and Tin Pot Creek (sites 8 and 17) are the only encampments identified by this survey, though others are suspected to have existed at Ruby Flat, Three Notch Track and Emu Flat. The Argus is the best example as the Tin Pot Creek site has been heavily disturbed by forestry and fossicking. This site is particularly worthy of preservation because of its relatively well preserved condition and the relationship of the components of the site, pig-oven, garden, hut site (or sites), blacksmith forge (suspected but not definite), and the mine, which was the only Chinese mine to use machines and was a highly successful mine employing European and Chinese labour.

SITE TYPE 5 - Miner's Dwelling:

Thirteen of these sites were located and there are likely to be many more, which, due to their isolated and dispersed locations, have not been recorded. The best examples are possibly site 18 (Gold Creek, CASCades) and sites 27, 28 and 29 (South Mount Cameron) which are located beside extensive mine workings. Sites 18 and 28 are probably the best preserved, but all have suffered the effects of fossicking.

SITE TYPE 6 - Mining Sites:

Chinese mine workings are scattered throughout the North East but many have been reworked by Europeans at later dates, destroying the original workings. There can also be a problem with authentication as Europeans and Chinese often worked alongside each other. The best authenticated sites are site 18 (located in an area which was leased solely by Chinese and where only Chinese pottery fragments were found) but the environs of this site have been heavily disturbed by forestry; and sites 27, 28 and 29 (located in predominantly Chinese leased areas where only Chinese pottery fragments were found) which are interconnected by extensive mine workings which appear totally undisturbed and the environs are also undisturbed.

SITE TYPE 7 - Market Gardens:

Many Chinese miners had their own gardens for private use and some also supplemented their income by selling surplus vegetables, particularly as they became too old to mine. Only two market garden sites as such (i.e. gardens established as the sole primary income source) were recorded by this survey (Mathinna and Gladstone) and both have been destroyed by ploughing and recultivation. However, there is no doubt that other gardens existed and better examples may be found amongst them. Well preserved garden sites of the secondary type remain at the Argus and Garibaldi sites and these would be worthy of preservation as part of the total site.

SITE TYPE 8 - Cemeteries and Memorials:

Chinese were buried in many cemeteries in the North East where no trace now remains on the surface, other than perhaps an unidentified grave (e.g. Union Church Graveyard, Goulds Country and Mathinna Cemetery). The marked graves and two

memorials which have survived at Weldborough, Moorina, Gladstone, Lefroy and Branxholm cemeteries are in varifying condition but many are suffering advanced decay. These sites should be preserved for their value as culturally significant fabric, as sources of information and for their traditional importance to the Chinese.

SITE TYPE 9 - Dwelling:

Three dwellings and 1 dwelling site were located which were not miners' dwellings; these are Jimmy Ah Foo's at Fingal, Le Fooks at Gladstone and Ah Moy's at Branxholm and the site of Jimmy Ah Foo's at Mathinna. All three surviving buildings have been altered from the original with Le Fook's having the least alteration. Le Fooks and Ah Foo's (Fingal) are well preserved and still occupied but Ah Moy's has suffered severe damage in a recent storm (1970 s) and is in a dilapidated and deteriorating condition. The site of Ah Foo's at Fingal has been cultivated for pasture and little remains on the surface. As rare examples of structural relics the three houses are interesting and may be worthy of preservation as culturally significant fabric.

SITE TYPE 10 - Shops:

Two shop sites and one shop were located (other than those located in Chinese townships) these are Ah Moy's store at Ruby Flat, Ah Choon's at the Cascades and Wong Hee's at Mathinna. Ah Moy's has been completely destroyed by subsequent mining, Ah Choon's has been heavily disturbed by a fossicker using a bulldozer, but Wong Hee's shop is very well preserved and is still occupied. As the only surviving Chinese shop this site is worthy of preservation as culturally significant fabric.

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5. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 WHY PRESERVE CHINESE SITES:

The Chinese played an important role in the early development and settlement of the North East. They comprise a significant ethnic group which has been largely overlooked by Tasmanian historians. The sites are likely, through archaeological investigation, to provide evidence which would not be otherwise available as to the exploration of the North East, development of tin mining, integration of the Chinese with the European communities, social organisation of the Chinese, trade with Launceston, Melbourne and China, cultural traditions and transmission (including technological), cultural adaptation, and development of transport and communication systems.

The sites can serve an educational function at secondary and tertiary level. All site types are scarce with the exception of mining sites and miners dwellings, and all are in danger of damage. Structural relics such as the monuments, graves and pig ovens are very rare and in danger of destruction through weathering and neglect.

Forestry activities are operating on a very large scale in North East Tasmania and present a new threat to historic sites. Clear felling, followed by hot firing can obliterate all trace of former habitation. Mining has also had a major impact on the landscape of the region, and many Chinese sites have long since disappeared under subsequent mining. Although mining is no longer an important industry, small scale mining still continues. Sites which have survived 100 years of human activity, wild fire and neglect are rapidly deteriorating due to three main threats; forestry, fossicking and fire.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS:

The first step towards preserving historic Chinese sites has been taken by surveying sites and compiling a list. The next stage would logically be to complete the listing by including market gardens, slate and gold mining sites in the Tamar region (Golconda, Lisle, Back Creek, Beaconsfield), and commercial and domestic premises in the city of Launceston. The usefulness of such a list would be greatly enhanced by more detailed investigation of a selection of sites by a multi-disciplinary team (comprising industrial archaeologists, historians, landscape archaeologists and historical geographers) to assess their information potential. Such an investigation need not involve extensive excavation.

However, investigation without preservation may prove counter-productive, accelerating the destruction of sites by drawing them to the attention of fossickers. Immediate steps should be taken to ensure the preservation of sites including, listing on the Register of the National Estate, classification by the National Trust, and reservation as conservation areas by the Tasmanian National Parks and Wildlife Service.

It is difficult to rate sites on the basis of a preliminary survey alone, but a list has been compiled to assist in the process of preservation. Sites have been identified as having a priority for preservation for their own merits,

or as examples of a particular type of site, or as complements to other sites, or because of serious threat of destruction. At least one of each site type has been included, except market gardens of which no good examples were located.

5.3 LIST OF SITES WITH THE HIGHEST PRIORITY FOR PRESERVATION:

- SITE 1 - Weldborough Chinese Camp site was the largest and most stable Chinese town in the North East. This site comprises the site of the Weldborough Joss house, 2 shop sites, 2 surviving weatherboard cottages (which are excellent examples of the vernacular style of the period), the site of the home of Maa Mon Chin, and adjacent mine workings.
- SITE 4 - Weldborough Cemetery, contains 1 of 2 Chinese memorials in the region which is in danger of collapse through neglect, one Chinese inscribed grave stone and a row of graves of one of the oldest Chinese families in Tasmania (the Chintock's).
- SITE 6 - Garibaldi, was a major Chinese town rivalling Weldborough in population of Chinese during the late 1890 s. It is in immediate danger of destruction by fossickers using bulldozers in their search for bottles. The site comprises a street lined with a row of approximately 5 building sites (some of them shops), a couple of gardens, 3 Chinese ovens, the site of the Garibaldi Joss house, water races, several hut sites and adjacent mine workings.
- SITE 8 - Ah Gar's Camp, a well preserved pig oven on a relatively undisturbed site which was the site of a miner's dwelling and garden. Complements site 6 and 9, and illustrates distributional aspects of sites.
- SITE 9 - The Argus, a well preserved miners camp site comprising, large garden, pig oven, chimney stones, water races, prospecting holes and associated with a highly successful, mechanised mine.
- SITE 12 - Ah Moy's home, Branxholm, a unique example of a Chinese family dwelling, shop and bootmaker combined in a vernacular style weatherboard building which is now in extreme danger of collapse.
- SITE 13 - Ah Doo's Hut site, located 100m behind Ah Moy's home, the two sites complement each other. A good example of a miners dwelling site with floor platform, wall depressions and chimney stones still evident.
- SITE 14 - Branxholm Joss house site, in very poor condition with no surface relics but possibly more information below the surface. Of interest as a Joss house site (probably the last one erected in the North East). Complemented by site 15, located 24m to the south.
- SITE 16 - Branxholm Cemetery, contains 2 Chinese marked graves in good condition.
- SITE 18 - Gold Creek, Cascades, a good example of a miners dwelling site and extensive mine workings and the

relationship between them.

- SITE 19 - Old Cascade Road, Cascades, an excellent example of a hut site in well preserved, extensive, grassy environs which contain a garden and a cart track.
- SITE 20 - Grass Paddocks, Cascades, similar environs to site 19, but no defined hut site located. Two piles of chimney stones and a small terraced area are located on the site said to have been the location of a Chinese store.
- SITE 21 - Ah Choon's Store site, although very badly disturbed by fossickers this site may prove interesting. Enormous quantities of glass found on the site.
- SITE 22 - Moorina Cemetery, contains a renovated Chinese memorial in very good condition and should continue to be maintained.
- SITE 23 - South Mount Cameron, one of four Chinese towns in the North East, important for its location en route to Boobyalla Port. Surface relics are indistinct but wall depressions of 3 huts are visible.
- SITES 27, 28 and 29 - Blue Lake and the Clifton Camps, Mount Cameron, are a group of miner's dwelling sites which complement each other and are interconnected by extensive mine workings. One well defined hut platform and 2 piles of chimney stones plus large quantities of cast iron cooking pots and Chinese pottery cover the area.
- SITE 30 - Ah Cow's Oven, Gladstone, the only oven in the Gladstone area and one of only three Chinese sites in the area worthy of preservation.
- SITE 32 - Le Fook's House, Gladstone, a weatherboard cottage built in the vernacular style, one of six Chinese buildings remaining in the entire North East.
- SITE 23 - Gladstone Cemetery, contains six Chinese gravestones and the site of an oven. This cemetery has more marked Chinese graves than any other in the North East.
- SITE 35 - Jimmy Ah Foo's, Fingal, a very well preserved weatherboard cottage and one of only four sites located in the region. The cottage belonged to a notable and successful Chinese gardener and businessman.
- SITE 37 - Lefroy Chinese Camp site, the first Chinese town in the North East and the site of the first Joss house (site 40). Very few surface relics identified.
- SITE 40 - Lefroy Joss house, complements site 39.
- SITE 41 - Lefroy cemetery, one Chinese gravestone stands in this cemetery. The number of unmarked graves is not known.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 : Census of Tasmania 1891

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APPENDIX 1

Occupation	Total	Education				Periods of Age			Grade			Electoral Districts										
		Read and Write	Read Only	Cannot Read	Read and Write (Foreign)	-20	-45	-65	Employer	Engaged on own account	Wage-earner	Hobart	Launceston	Wellington	East Devon	Cressy	Westbury	George Town	Ringarooma	Selby	Fingal	Other Areas
Blacksmiths	1				1			1		1	1								1		1	
Bootmakers	5				5		3	2		4	1			1					3			
Butchers	1				1		1			1	1								1			
Cabinetmakers	7			1	6		6	1	1	2	4	6	1								1	
Carptnters	1				1			1		1												
Clerks (Merchant)	1	1					1			1	1		1								1	
Commission Agents	2				2		1	1		2									2		1	1
Cooks	6	2		1	3		5	1			4	1		2					1			
Failmongers	1		1					1		1	1	1										
Fishermen	1				1		1			1									1			
Fishcurers	2				2			2	1	1	1											2
Fruiterers	3				3		2	1		2	1		2						1			
Gardeners, Market	122	31	1	14	74	4	88	24	12	61	46	20	21	15	9			7	4	26		11
Hawkers	9			2	7		4	5	1	6	2	2	5	1					1			
Jewellers	2				2			2		2									1		1	
Joss-house Keeper	1				1			1			1								1			
Labourers, Flour-mill	1				1			1			1	1										
Saw-mill	1			1				1			1											
Lodging-house Keepers	8	1		2	5			2	1	6	1		1						3		4	
Lottery Keepers	7				7			7		6	1								7			
Medical Practitioners (Irregular)	2				2			1		1	1								2			
Merchants, General	4	3			1																	
Minister of Religion (Missionary)	1				1				2	2	1	1	3						1			
Mine Owners	2				2				2												2	
Miners, Tin, Alluvial	695	3	7	108	573	7	410	270	8	386	295		1						529		165	
Occupation not stated	1			1								1										
Packers	2			1	1		1	1			2								1		1	
Servants, Domestic	2		1		1		2			2	1	1	1									
Storekeepers, General	34	1		4	29	2	18	14	12	7	14	1	3						23		7	
Stationers	1			1			1		1			1										
Tailors	1				1			1		1											1	
Tobacconists	1			1			1			1		1										
Wood-cutters	3				3		2	1		3									3			
TOTAL	931	42	10	137	736	13	547	342	41	495	382	37	39	19	9			7	580	26	184	14

Census of Tasmania 1891: Showing the number of Chinese (Males) in the Colony and in each Electoral District, their Occupations, Education and Periods of Age.

NB: This is reproduced in part from the Census of 1891, Appendix on the Chinese. Column totals donot always add up as some columns of less relevance to this study have been deleted

Occupation	Total	Education				Periods of Age					Grade			Electoral District												
		Read and Write	Read Only	Cannot Read	Read and Write (Foreign)	-20	-25	-45	-65	65 and over	Employer	Engaged on own account	Wage-earner	Hobart	Launceston	West Devon	Devonport	Selby	George Town	Ringarooma	Fingal	Lyell	Waratah	Queenborough	Glenorchy	Other Areas
Breadwinners Males.																										
Bootmaker	1	1							1		1										1					
Cabinetmaker	1			1						1	1		1													
Carpenter	1			1						1	1										1					
Cooks	4	2			2			3	1				4	1							2		1			
Farmers	2			1	1			1	1		1		1					1		1						
Farm Labourers	19	3		2	14		1	18				19						3			1		15			
Gardeners (Market)	146	23	13	43	65	1	15	96	30	3	28	50	68	6	33	10	14	25	8	12	6	5	4	7	7	9
Greengrocers	5	3			2			5				5								1		3	1			
Hawkers	1	1							1				1	1												
Joss-House Keepers	2				2					1			2								2					
Merchants (General)	7	4	1	1	1			5	2	1	2	5		4	3											
Miners (Tin)	238			31	207	1		93	119	25	4	206	28							154	84					
Servants (General)	3	2		1		1		2					3	1	2											
Store-assistants	17	3			10	2	1	12	2				17	2	4		3			2	5	1				
Storekeepers	15	7		1	7	1		7	6	1	6	9				1	1			6	2	4	1			
Tobacconist	1	1							1				1	1												
Total Males	463	50	14	82	311	6	17	242	165	32	41	278	144	17	42	11	18	29	8	178	102	14	21	7	7	13
Females																										
Domestic Servants	2	1			1	2							2							1					1	
Total Breadwinners	465	51	14	82	312	8	17	242	165	32	41	278	146	17	42	11	18	29	8	179	102	14	21	7	8	13
Dependants Males																										
Hospital Patients	2			2					1	1																2
Scholars	7	6	1			7								2	1					1	3					
Sons	10	1		9		10												2		4	4					
Total Males	19	7	1	11		17			1	1				2	1			2		5	7					2
Females																										
Daughters	7	1		6		7								1	2				2	2						
Scholars	8	6		2		8									2				2	2	2					
Wives	6	2		1	3			6						1	1				2	2	1					
Patient, House of Mercy	1			1		1								1												
Total Females	22	9		10	3	16		6						3	5				5	6	3					
TOTAL DEPENDANTS	41	16	1	21	3	33		6	1	1				5	6			2	5	11	10					10
TOTAL CHINESE	506	67	15	103	315	41	17	248	166	33	41	278	146	22	48	11	18	31	13	190	112	14	21	7	8	15

Census of Tasmania, 1901: Showing the number of Chinese, Electoral Districts, their Occupations, Education and Age.
 NB: Columns do not always add-up as some columns, of less relevance to this study, have been deleted.

APPENDIX 3A: ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW WITH CHARLES WHITE

Miss Helen Vivian interviewing Mr Charles Henry White 10-10-1983.

Mr Charles Henry White

Born: 17th January, 1892 (92 years old) at Lottah.

Present address: 46 Blainey Road
Punchbowl, Launceston

HV: It's an interview with Mr Charles White of 46 Blainey Road, Launceston.
When were you born Mr White?

CW: 17th January, 1892.

HV: Where were you born?

CW: At Lottah. Our homestead was right on the junction it was. Lottah used to be called the Blue Tier Junction at one time and then it was changed to Lottah, which means gum tree in Aborigine.

HV: When did your parents come to Lottah?

CW: I'm not sure when they came there, but they came in the very early days of the tin mining. It was a very rich area up there and Weldborough was exceptionally rich. There was tin lying on the surface. The specific gravity of tin is 7 and of course the earth that it is mixed with that varies in this specific gravity. But of course wolframs specific gravity is $7\frac{1}{2}$ and they can't separate it by gravity and tin is non-magnetic and wolfram is magnetic. They can separate wolfram from the tin by magnetism you see and that's how they separated it you see, but you can't separate it from gravity it's too close.

HV: How long did you live at Lottah?

CW: I lived there... I was about 18 when I first left Lottah to go and work at the South Garibaldi River.

HV: How long were you at Garibaldi?

CW: I was at the South Garibaldi Mine. I was working and I went through the Three Notch Track to the Blue Tier. I walked through there to Garibaldi.

HV: How long did it take?

CW: As a matter of fact I don't know but it's [speech hard to hear] up to the Three Notch Track they walk through there to Pioneer and a coach goes around by road to the other side. The Three Notch Track, it was a track and they cut Three Notches into trees from one to the other so they could see their way. That's how it was called the Three Notch Track.

HV: So you walked through from Lottah to...?

CW: Yes to Garibaldi.

HV: How long did you stay at Garibaldi?

CW: I forget now, nearly 12 months I think. Then I went to the Briseis Mine. I worked there for some time then I went to Victoria. I worked on the [speech hard to hear] water scheme.

HV: So your major memories of the Lottah and Blue Tier areas go back how far?

CW: Well it was before I was 6 years old that I remember the Blue Tier. They had a [speech hard to hear] road there. And they had a bump bump over it with horses and carts and the myrtle trees were nearly meeting over the top of the road and it was dense bush. Myrtle country. The Myrtle trees had no tap route and when they became exposed the wind blew them over quicker than those with a big tap route like a gum tree and the [speech hard to hear]. Cowens they cleared the Blue Tier up to make it good enough to pass. Each year or a couple of years a fire would go through and the trees fell and dried.

This process would go on for years and years and they used to sell grass and the ashes because there would be a lot of pot ash you see. They had about 400 sheep there on the Blue Tier and they fenced it and so on. They had a gate across the road, and it was just known as the Blue Tier gate. That was so their stock wouldn't get out and come down to the lower ground. They gradually fenced it off but of course it was too expensive to fence it all off at once. They gradually fenced it off and the Blue Tier, there is about 700 acres when you get on to the top of the Blue Tier you can notice the glorified air when you get there. I don't know the exact altitude. It's in the vicinity of 3000 feet above sea level and Lottah was built on the side of the Blue Tier and Poimena is the proper name of that. There is a township survey there and one of the streets is called Backup Street and I don't remember the other streets, but it struck me as, you know this Backup family he was... Other Chinese were not accepted as readily as people like Mr Backup at Lottah and Maa Mon Chin at Weldborough. Maa Mon Chin was a store keeper and he was always well dressed and he had 2 or 3 lovely daughters according to Chinese standard and they were pretty wealthy people. But Backup was a very wonderful citizen and his mother was Irish and her first husband was a man named Kingston and she told me that he was a Spanish Prince and when he passed on... She had one son to him Thomas Jerome was his name and when she married Backup she had one son to Backup. Simon Backup and he didn't look like the ordinary half cast, but you could tell he had foreign blood. But he was delicate, I think he had T.B. Backup gave them a wonderful education in Ballarat.

HV: Do you remember the name of Mr Backup?

CW: They used to call him George Backup, but G. G. Backup was in there, but we used to call him Mr Backup that's all. But he was a splendid man and this herbalist business, he used to have a canvas bag with a strap over the shoulder and he'd go out to the bush and collect herbs and bring them back and treat them then pound them up in [speech hard to hear] and water and the men on the Anchor - if a handle wasn't put in correctly into a [speech hard to hear] hammer, that was a hammer - they varied from 12 to 16 and 18 pounds the hammers for [speech hard to hear] big stones. They'd jar if they hit a foul blow and it would jar the flesh onto the bone and that would cause an abscess. They use to call that a jarred hand. Well Backup use to make poultice's, one to put on the front and one on the back. I remember someone asking why and he said "one pushing and one pulling". That one was to drive it and the other one was to draw it. He didn't charge people for that at all. He treated hundred's and he never charged for it at all. He gave that free and he started a store (there's a picture of it in there). He started a grocer's store and all the Chinese used to make it their headquarters but there was no other Chinese that used to live at Lottah like Backup and the others used to live in the surrounds of Lottah. A mine called the Liberator that Thomas Backup discovered and floated into a company, I think. It's as near as I can remember. They also lived down at the Anchor in a hut called the Long Hut. I was told they camped in that, but I didn't see it myself.

HV: That was at the Anchor?

CW: Yes, at the Anchor and then Terrivale was about 14 miles from Lottah on the St. Helens side about a mile from the highway and there was a Chinamen there Ah Jack and I don't know what his mate was, another one and they were tin mining there and they had the first I ever saw of this automatic washing machine. The power at Rivulet(?) was a place where it was run faster than others according to the width of it and they use to tie their garments to a twig - a flexible twig and they would tie a garment to each one of them and the water would get the motion that boiling does and it used to wash them very clean and they used to wear shirts. You know those shirts with red and black squares in them now?

HV: Yes.

CW: Well they used to wear shirts that colour. I remember them quite well. I was 6 years old then.

HV: Red and black check?

CW: Yes, red and black shirt Ah Jack use to wear. There was on the Tier a Chinaman there Ah Ling. He was spotlessly clean and always well dressed. I think he would be the last Chinaman, but there was a man there later Bill Bow. They use to refer to him as a Chinaman but he was a Mongolian.

HV: How did you know that?

CW: I was living there at the time. Of course Ah Ling was there before I ever left Lottah. He camped on the Blue Tier. The Blue Tier was a plateau of about 700 acres and it was a township and it had a school and my two eldest sisters and my eldest brother use to walk from Lottah to the Blue Tier to school. There was no school at Lottah those days. What was known then as the Blue Tier Junction and they used to walk to school and the school master was a man named MacGregor and he was very fond of using a cane and it made it very hard on the children. You saw a lot of that in the early days.

HV: How far was it from Lottah?

CW: About 2½ miles. It was steep and very often snowing there. I saw snow there one Christmas afternoon, only a very light fall but in the winter time I played football in snow storms. I have got a photograph of the teams of those days but whether you are interested or not I don't know. When I was about 18 my eldest brother and I used to play football. My eldest brother and I played and Jack Charlesworth. He use to be captain/coach. He use to play with us. He was the best centre man in Australia they reckoned at the time.

HV: What did the Chinese do for recreation?

CW: They use to have a Chinese New Year at Weldborough and also Garibaldi and there was one Chinese at Garibaldi who gave a demonstration. I don't know whether it would be defense or offense. There was a canvas and he had a long pole and he gave one hit like that and sort of [speech hard to hear] and he cut 6 holes in the canvas. I saw that. He cut 6 holes in the canvas.

HV: You were talking about Ah Ling and Bill Bow.

CW: Ah Ling towards the end he wasn't very well and any how they found him dead in his camp. He camped with Bow and Bow fell very ill and the doctor attended him but I think he died of old age. Bow was a Mongolian.

HV: Did you ever have any conversation with either of those two?

CW: Oh yes I knew them well. They were quite well and in the early days when the Chinese first started coming into the district they were more or less unduly looked down on, but some of the miners had the view you see, that those Chinese were coming to mine the tin that they would otherwise mine. They were foreigners and that caused a bit of prejudice and of course the children, they were influenced by the adults. But the Chinese they were very honest. My people had the butchers and bakers and general store there and there was only one Chinese who tried to be dishonest and he soon found he was in the wrong. But my parents - there was that much [speech hard to hear] on the books they closed their business and it would amount to a terrific amount today. It was all white people who owned it. It wasn't Chinamen

that owned it. They were very honest people and very industrious. They couldn't put as much work behind them in 8 hours as an Australian could, because in that time Australia was noted to put more work behind them in 8 hours as any other people in the world. It wasn't far removed from slavery because as a matter of fact if the bosses didn't like the men they lost their own job and they use to walk up and down the bank telling them [speech hard to hear] all these sorts of things. One contractor said he would sooner see a man get killed on a horse because if a man got killed there would be another one waiting on the bank. You had to buy a horse. I knew the contractor to. The same contractor, a stump fell down on a man in the quarry one day and killed him and he said "I wouldn't have that happen for ten bob", he put some adjectives into it. He said he was a good worker to. That's the attitude they had, some contractors but others were quite different, it was just the odd one that was uncouth. I always got on well with them but some of the bosses were unreasonably hard on the men. Because you see some people had families depending on them and they had heart trouble or some other trouble and they had to keep on going. They had to take these insults they wouldn't give it to someone that wouldn't take it. They knew too much for that. But it wasn't far removed from slavery in those days and that was forced [speech hard to hear].

HV: How did the Chinese work, did they work on the same mines and same areas as the Europeans?

CW: Yes the same areas. In the first place they use to use a sluice box. It was about 12 inches. They varied from 12 to 18 inches wide [speech hard to hear] and when they came to the real sluicing and nozzles and that it was quite a different process. In the very first days they use to shovel all this tin bearing material into sluice boxes and they use to fork the stones out, which they called [speech hard to hear] and the tin would remain behind. The box would have been 20 to 12 feet long most of them and they would have about 3 to 4 inches fall in it. The outlet end would have been 3 or 4 inches lower than the intake and they used to stream it in there. After that they got to the crown sluicing where they sluiced it into a [speech hard to hear] 4 to 5 foot wide for the average run. On the Briseis Mine they had a race there much wider. I never measured it but it was well over the average because the Briseis Mine was a very big mine. I worked on the Overburden. Their mine. There had been two distinct volcanic [speech hard to hear] there. They formed part of the Overburden and then there was a big volume of quartz sand. It would cut your fingers. It use to wear our fingers through handling the stone. We use to have to work three shifts - night, afternoon and day.

HV: At the Briseis?

CW: At the Briseis Mine. I was about 18 years old then. The spray of these nozzles, had 300 foot of pressure. The intake was 300 feet above the outlet and a 7 inch tip. They started 3 feet deep - diameter of the pipes were at the top and they gradually got smaller and smaller and they had giant nozzles and they'd screw a tip on that, that poured into the available supply of water. They would usually use a 7 inch tip and that would spray 72 heads of water. We would work under that and that would bring stones down, maybe 2 yards long, they would be 6 feet long and quite a lot into a [speech hard to hear]. There were men there with sort of rakes - long rods with rakes on them. They [speech hard to hear] of water. They use to rake them out and put them into dumps. Going into Derby you'd see these [speech hard to hear]. Have you been to Lottah?

HV: No I haven't been to Lottah.

CW: That's about 24 miles from Derby. That's on the St Helens side.

HV: I'm going there this trip.

CW: The road that comes from Weldborough, if you keep going it goes into where our back yard used to be and you have to cross the main road to go in. The place we lived in was built by my grandfather as a Temperance Hotel and it was not two storey's, but it wasn't built like the present day two storey's. It was just built like a one storey place with an upstairs. There were three rooms up stairs and then there was an attic.

HV: How many of you lived in it?

CW: There was nine in our family that was reared. The eldest son died. He was christened the same name as me. There were two sisters and then the eldest brother and then there was another sister, then me, then there was my sister Kathleen. I think her photograph is still in the Royal Hobart Hospital. She was on the Board for a few years. She got by every year. She was very prominent there in different works and different charities and so on. She started the Northern Auxillary here. Then she lived in Glenorchy. They had a store there but how on earth she had time to do all the other things I don't know. Kathleen Wicks was her married name. [speech hard to hear]. One of her grandchildren lives in Sydney. My niece is a nursing sister. Two of her daughters (she's got 3 daughters) two of them - ones a nursing sister and the other is a nurse and the youngest one is studying for Hotel Management.

HV: You have quite a history of nursing there. You were describing the way the Chinese mined the tin. Did they actually work alongside the Europeans or did they work on their own?

CW: They worked on their own. There was some of the half cast Chinese, they were some of the best citizens around. They were accepted into the Community and one of them sort of had an inferiority complex but we get that amongst our own people to don't we? They were really good citizens. Some of the best citizens they had - some of the half casts. You get other nations where there is good, bad and indifferent. But some of them were very fine people. I knew them very well. The Backups I knew them well and Thomas Backup treated him so well and educated him. I've heard it said that he could speak seven languages fluently. I knew he could speak two because when he entered State Parliament here, they reckon his opening speech was something terrific and then he said of course you always get the knockers in those places in a mining town. You got all sorts there. Thomas got into State Parliament and he said it was only a stepping stone. Of course in Federal Parliament the knockers laughed about him but he got into Federal Parliament and he had a knowledge of China so they used to send him there. He could speak Chinese fluently.

HV: His father wasn't Chinese?

CW: No, but he took the name of Thomas Jerome Kingston Backup afterwards, and he always remained. Backup was so good to him and did so much for him he was always loyal to the Chinese. Jill James told me, that one of his worst features in Parliament was, he was very much against women. His wife told me that he was a model husband. I knew her and her two daughters. They had one son that died at birth. I always thought it a pity because he had a wonderful brain, but still, I didn't agree with him on all his views. John Earl, the first Premier (Labour Premier of Tasmania) worked on the Blue Tier and Tommy Backup he said would have been a Labour man only he thought that Earl wasn't sincere and he became a conservative as they were known in those days and it turned

out Earl wasn't sincere either because while he was Premier he turned [speech hard to hear]. I don't think that should be allowed myself. They put him in as Labour, Liberal or any other that ran for politics. They should remain that until they have finished their term, that's my opinion. I don't think they should be allowed to but John Earl did. So Backup was right. While we were away fighting he tried to get in Parliament that we only get a shilling a day, the same as the English. Of course we were very much against that. He lost a lot of political popularity.

HV: Who moved that?

CW: Backup did. We didn't like that. That was when I first got to know that Political antagonism is only false. After I came back from the war, (I knew Jim Guy, he was a hard and fast Labour man) I was walking down Cameron Street (the base hospital was in Cameron Street) and I saw these two walking ahead of me and I recognised them as Tommy Backup and Jim Guy and I walked along and caught up to them and we were walking down and talking to them, they were talking just like real good cobblers. But on the political scene they would say all sorts of things against them so I knew then that this was all hog wash this. The things they say about one another during election time.

HV: Just the way they had to play the game.

CW: Yes, like the war the things they said about our enemies during the war [speech hard to hear]. When there is a war on you can say anything about your enemies. You don't know where you are because they never gave any of the men who fought in the war the same privileges the same as our former enemies. They said some awful things about them. The man who used to sink their so called merchant ships, they brought him out here [speech hard to hear] I think it was. They brought him out here after the war and gave him big banquets here and the men who fought against him and the relatives that lost their dear ones were outside looking in and he was inside looking out you see and that Japaneseman that buys the wool. He makes a fortune out of him. He gives donations around and they gave him the freedom of the city. They didn't do that for the men that lay their lives down. [speech hard to hear] I lost two careers going there. Because when I came back I lost concentration. I was studying anatomy and physiology and I lost that and then I was singing and I lost that. I got a bullet. It tore my lung open in my chest. It used to catch me with my breathing. You have to have a lot of breath control when you are singing. I was in the choir. It use to catch me singing [speech hard to hear] I lost concentration for anatomy after I got back.

HV: It doesn't seem just does it?

CW: The first ten days we were there, we fought day and night. We would go to sleep on our feet. We went from the Sunday night till late on Tuesday night. There were 14 of us cut off and only 14 of us left Tuesday night and we could not get any food or water. My tongue was cracked and my throat swelled for the lack of water. [speech hard to hear] I went to the extreme left. [speech hard to hear]. When I got there I was amongst all the New Zealanders.

HV: I'm very interested in the way the Chinese managed their mines. How many of them would work on a mine together?

CW: It varied in numbers. Sometimes there would be one on his own. Sometimes there would be more. They use to work and as the white man improved the methods of mining they also improved their methods. I suppose they got

to know how to do it. You couldn't prospect after them, they cleared every speck. They never wasted any. They use to live principally on rice. They use to come to Backups place to get it. You see he had the store there and all the Chinese used to deal off him. They used to come from around the surrounding parts. That's the Blue Tier (Poimena as it was) and the Liberator and various and the [speech hard to hear] Anchor. Backups were the only people I knew who lived in Lottah. They had the store. As a matter of fact Mr Backup's funeral was the largest funeral ever seen at Lottah. But they seemed an exception. They looked down on the Chinese unduly I think because when I grew up to be able to think for myself I knew there was a lot of good in them. They were very honest. Very industrious and so on. Until you grow up you are influenced by [speech hard to hear] the adults.

HV: How many Chinese would have been in the area?

CW: That's something I couldn't say because they were in so many different places. There was more in the Lottah area before I can remember than there was afterwards. I remember [speech hard to hear] coming from St Helens. There was a man named Wilson I think. A lot of the miners met them on the way. Wilson cut one of their pigtails off. They use to have hair plaited down their back and they called them pig tails. He cut one of them off and poked it through a stick. There was that sort of hostility towards them.

HV: You remember this as a story?

CW: Yes, only as a story. I can't vouch for it. It's only as I heard it. The other things that I told you is what I can remember. I remember about the one when I was six years old at Terrivale. That was on the farm of relatives of us. They had the farm there.

HV: How many Chinese were there at Terrivale?

CW: Only two at Terrivale. Only two Chinese. That's as far as I knew. I don't remember any being in [speech hard to hear] country. There was always quite a few about the Anchor and the Blue Tier and the Liberator and the surrounds of Lottah. Backups were the only family living there.

HV: Were there any Chinese working on the Anchor Mine?

CW: No. They didn't work on mines like the white man did. The Anchor Mine was a Company. A man named Dicky Mitchell, he went to England and floated it and it was bought by an English Company and they worked it for years. I can remember quite a number of managers there. Lindsay Clark was a manager. Jamie Lewis was one of the last managers there. I knew quite a number of managers.

HV: Why did they prefer to work by themselves?

CW: It seems there was a sort of a definite line drawn somehow between them and the white man. The half cast's worked amongst the white people. They worked with the Chinese and all. They were accepted. There was some very fine citizens amongst them. Some of them were not so fine. I knew some very good ones.

HV: So most of the Chinese who worked in the area didn't come into Lottah much at all?

- CW: No they just came for their provisions. They would stop at Backup's place. I think Tommy Backup use to (Thomas Kingston really, but we use to call him Tommy Backup) do all their clerical work for them.
- HV: So he acted as a banker for them and things?
- CW: He would do all that for them I think. He'd help them. He was a very fine citizen Backup. He had two very nice daughters. In fact I have got their photograph's somewhere.
- HV: Who's this old George Backup?
- CW: They use to call him George Backup. They put in some places G. G. Backup. G. Backup would be probably his Chinese name. They used to have the names Ah Jack and Him Sheen and all these things.
- HV: Do you remember Him Sheen?
- CW: They were at Pioneer. They use to call them Shean's. They were very fine people to. I knew some of them very well. In fact they were half cast's the Shean's. Peter and Billy. I used to play football against Billy. A good little footballer to.
- HV: Did you ever meet Him Sheen their father?
- CW: No I never met their father.
- HV: What about their mother?
- CW: No I never met their mother. There was a lady, (her husband was a Chinese, a Chinese interpreter) and she was a half cast and she married a man that I knew and he had a brother. They were a very fine family. She was an organist at one of the churches for years. I knew her well and she was a very lovely person.
- HV: What was her name?
- CW: Cunningham. There were two Cunningham's there and they were no relation. This was Albert Cunningham she married. She had a very fine family.
- HV: She was half Chinese and he was European?
- CW: No her husband was European. She was a very lucky person, I knew her exceptionally well. I use to visit her when she was ill. In hospital here before she died.
- HV: Did she ever talk about growing up as a half Chinese?
- CW: No she never had an inferiority complex in any shape or form. She was a lovely person and she had a good family to. The family were fine people and very prominent. One was a very good footballer. He was one of the best. They were very fine people. Some of the Chinese descendants were very fine people.
- HV: Do you remember how many half Chinese children there were at school, when you went to school?
- CW: There was none at our school.
- HV: That was at Lottah?
- CW: Yes. Simon Backup was a good shorthand writer. He was a very well educated man. He could write splendid letters, but he couldn't make a speech. On the other hand Thomas was one of the best writers in Australia. It's rather peculiar. Thomas was a very fine writer. When the elections were on there was a lot of mud slinging.
- HV: When did Billy Bow come to the Blue Tier?

- CW: He use to be in the St. Helens area and I can't quite remember when he came. I was farming on the North-West Coast and after I was married I shifted back to Lottah and I worked on the Mount Michael Tin Mining Company. It was somewhere about that time, I think 1925 that I came back. I don't know whether he was there yet or not. It was 1925 when I came back to Lottah for the North-West Coast. I went farming.
- HV: Did he manage to make a reasonable living?
- CW: Just tin mining. Tin scratching they called it. That's the term they used for people just going about with a miners right. They called that tin scratching.
- HV: Did he make a good living out of it?
- CW: I think he just made a living and that was all.
- HV: What about Ah Ling?
- CW: He used to live well I think. Always dressed well and spotlessly clean.
- HV: Did you ever see where he lived?
- CW: Yes.
- HV: What sort of house?
- CW: A hut he had.
- HV: One room?
- CW: Yes, one room.
- HV: How big would it be?
- CW: About 10 by 12. That's the usual hut. Some were smaller, some were a bit bigger.
- HV: What were they made of?
- CW: Wood. Split wood.
- HV: What about the chimney?
- CW: Remarkably the white men and the Chinamen also made their chimney's out of wood. They use to stand a bucket of water inside the house in case the chimney caught alight after they went to bed and they would have to jump out and put it out and it wasn't years after that they made their chimney's out of iron. Galvenised iron. In our house the roof had two brick chimney's and a baker's oven.
- HV: Did the Chinese have a stone hearth?
- CW: They just use to live in huts. They had a bellows. A Chinese bellows made of four small pieces of wood about 6 inches wide, with a small plunger in it. When they would push it down, the air would go out of the bottom and when they pull it up there was a valve that would let the air in and when they went to push it down the valve would close down again and that provided them with air to blow the forge to sharpen the tool's with.
- HV: They had a blacksmith's forge?
- CW: Yes. They used that for a bellow's.
- HV: Whereabouts was this?
- CW: On the Blue Tier at Poimena. There was quite a lot of people who lived there.

HV: On the Blue Tier?

CW: Yes. There is a man still living in Launceston here that is a very delicate sort of person and he is the eldest person that is still living that was born on the Blue Tier. I'm the eldest person still living in Lottah.

HV: What's his name?

CW: Fred Keldhart(?). He was born at Poimena at the Blue Tier.

HV: Where does he live?

CW: In Launceston. I forget his address. He got hip disease when he was quite little. He has been crippled ever since. He is nearly blind now. He came out to see me one day. He was always a very religious person. His sister became religious and she was a missionary. Some of his children are missionaries to. But he always was religious right from a little child. He has grown up that way.

HV: Were there very many Chinese in the Blue Tier?

CW: Yes, there was quite a few up there. I couldn't give you an estimate of the number.

HV: Did they have a store?

CW: No. I don't know whether there was a store before I could remember. But they had a school there. The school was built by Mr Frank Cole(?) and someone else. Mr Frank Cole(?) was a German and he was a cabinet maker. He made a lovely job of building the school. The education department shifted it instead of leaving it there. They shifted it from the Blue Tier.

HV: What a shame.

CW: Yes, it is a shame because quite a lot of people lived in it. Darcy Griffen(?) was a very well known citizen out there. He originally came from Hobart but he kept the hotel there. Cook's before Darcy Griffen(?) and I think there was someone else. They shifted it to Heritage then to Jubilee. That was there for quite a number of years. Herrick was named after Jerry Herrick(?) who use to be head [speech hard to hear] on the Anchor Mine and he was appointed travelling [speech hard to hear] on the railway from Branhholm to Herrick. When I was only a kid, the railway ran from Launceston to Scottsdale. They use to drag their boilers from the Blue Tier through mud covered roads and bogs and everything with timber horses. It was cruel the way they treated some of the poor wretched animals. [speech hard to hear] I'm a great horse lover myself.

HV: Was there any horse racing?

CW: Yes. There was quite a few race horse's at Lottah. Mr Alf Wooley the chap who had Wooley's Hotel (I forget the proper name of it, I always remember it as Wooley's Hotel) he had several racehorse's. He only had two or three at a time.

HV: Was there a race track at Lottah?

CW: No, there was a recreation ground. I can remember when it was a heap of logs. Big logs, 8 to 10 foot through them. The working men (before the turn of the century) use to go down there of a night and saw them up, burn them and they got it cleared. It was the only [speech hard to hear] level place they could find on the [speech hard to hear] perched on the side of the Blue Tier Range. The Munday's at Piongana, he came through

from Piongana there and cleared up part of it. It grew up with scrub and he cleared part of it for the "Back to Lottah Celebrations." Jill James took me up and took my daughter [speech hard to hear] with me. I stayed with George Munday. The doctor wouldn't like me to go up and back in a day. It would have been too much. At that time I was much worse than I am now. Jill took me up and we stayed with George Munday (he's her stepfather). She told me she never knew anything except kindness from George. It would be out of character if she did. He's a wonderful citizen.

HV: Did you ever attend any Chinese celebrations?

CW: Yes, Chinese New Year. When we were older we'd get on our bikes and go through to Weldborough.

HV: They didn't have a celebration at Lottah?

CW: No, they never had Chinese Year there. The Chinese used to come through and buy up pigs and they used to go to different places. They would buy these pigs and drive them all to Weldborough. They used to roast the pig and have a feast in the Joss House. There is a man in Hobart, George Gardener, he is about, a good bit younger than me. He may have something that has been passed on to him from the olden days that would be of interest.

HV: You actually attended some of these?

CW: Yes at Garibaldi and Weldborough. Both.

HV: How did they differ? Was Garibaldi as big as Weldborough?

CW: No. It was much smaller. A more concentrated camp. The road from the South Garibaldi Mine passed through the Chinese camp. I knew one half cast and at Weldborough the Maa Mon Chinns. They were highly respected and of course Backup he was...

HV: You knew Maa Mon Chin did you?

CW: No I didn't know him, I only knew him by sight. I didn't know him personally. I didn't know his daughters either. They were much older than me. He was very much older and they were quite a bit older than me.

HV: How many buildings do you remember on Weldborough. Chinese camps I mean?

CW: Chinese camps. I don't know how many were camped around the vicinity of the camp. Some were camped out at what they called the [speech hard to hear] the Emu, what they called the Emu Road. Some were out there. They were scattered all... Some out in the other direction towards a track that went to Ringarooma. It was called Bell's Hill's or Bell's Plain's. That's all mining land. There's Renison Bell. You've heard of Renison Bell. He was a man who found tin in a number of places.

HV: Did the Chinese have a Joss House anywhere in the Lottah, Blue Tier area?

CW: No, they didn't. They had one at Weldborough. I'm a bit puzzled about the one at Garibaldi. Some people say they took the one from Garibaldi to Weldborough. George Gardener used to take Chinese from Weldborough to Garibaldi for the Chinese New Year. That's after the Joss House was shifted. My father brought it into town. He had a 100 weight truck and Allen Hollingsworth was Mayor of Launceston and he was also the Federal Member of Parliament. He was a senior in our battalion. I knew Allen well. He was a Conservative but he loved Ben Chifley. That was when Ben Chifley was Prime Minister.

HV: Were you around when they were moving the Joss House?

CW: Yes, I was at Lottah. I use to live at Lottah. I went back to Lottah and I lived in a house on the [speech hard to hear] country side of Lottah. My father was still living in our old home. I lived there from 1925 till 1935. Then I shifted 'nto town.

HV: Do you remember what the Joss House looked like when it was in Weldborough?

CW: It looked something like it looks now. It's down in the Museum here. But of course they have altered it a bit. The Joss horse that Joss is supposed to get on and ride, well George Gardener got on and had a ride and if the Chinese had caught him they would have killed him. He was only a kid. You know what kid's are. The horse is still there.

HV: What about the building itself?

CW: It was built out of timber.

HV: What was the shape of it?

CW: Fairly long, but not very big. I was only young then and I didn't take much notice of dimensions. You don't when you're young.

HV: Did it have a verandah on the front?

CW: I'm not sure. I can't remember. We always used to make Chinese New Year. They use to have a display of fire works. Fantastic it was. To us anyhow.

HV: Would the display at Garibaldi been as impressive as the display at Weldborough?

CW: Yes it was very impressive. Very nice. What astounded me was this man cutting six holes in the canvas with one hit.

HV: Were you invited to eat some of the food as well?

CW: No. I never ate any of the food. I think they just had that amongst themselves. They may have had friends that they invited along to it but I don't remember.

HV: How did Billy Bow get on with the other Chinese?

CW: There was none there when he came. I'm not sure whether Ah Ling was still on the tier or not. I didn't know how he got on with them at all. Ah Ling was the last Chinese on the tier. He was very respected to. He was a very clean man and everybody treated him with respect. He was always well dressed.

HV: What sort of clothes did he wear?

CW: He use to wear a very light slipper and it was about that thick the sole. A very light material and white.

HV: About an inch thick on the sole?

CW: Yes it had no heels on it. [speech hard to hear]. He'd just slide along. The Chinese use to carry vegetables [speech hard to hear] from Garibaldi through to Lottah and come through the Three Notch Track and they carried them through on a bamboo pole and a basket on each end and they'd sort of [speech hard to hear] and the pole would swing. It was very wonderful what they could carry. They could carry tin like that to [speech hard to hear].

HV: Goodness me!

CW: It was marvelous what they could carry.

HV: Do you remember who that was?

CW: No I can't remember the man's name. I did know it but I can't remember his name. He use to stop over night with Mr Backup.

HV: Did he grow vegetables?

CW: Yes he grew them at Garibaldi and brought them through to Lottah?

HV: What was the setup at Garibaldi. Was there a large community garden or did he have his own little garden?

CW: He only had his own garden I think. He grew his own vegetables there. There was one old chap at Garibaldi with whiskers. I knew him to look at but there was...

HV: White whiskers?

CW: Yes.

HV: Sharkee?

CW: Yes, that's the name. I remember him. He was a very prominent man there.

HV: What did he do?

CW: I don't know what he did. I don't know much about him. A chap named Fred Higg (he use to work on the South Garibaldi) was a half cast. He married a half cast girl named [speech hard to hear]. She was very pretty.

HV: I wonder why Ah Ling and Billy Bow didn't go back to China or at least back to Launceston or somewhere that life would have been easier for them?

CW: No, they stayed on the Tiers until they bacame ill and Dr [speech hard to hear], that's the gentleman up there, he was a lovely old fellow Dr [speech hard to hear]. He was just like a father to them. He called everbody by their christian name. He would be going in and pick a flower and stick in his coat. He would make himslef at home. He would have a cup of tea with everybody. He was just like a father to them up there.

HV: Why do you think they stayed mining. Why didn't they leave when they got old?

CW: I don't know. There was one man, the last Chinese on Weldborough was a man they called Cha Lee Hee Jarm. He had a store there and his horse, he meant it to be called Colin but he use to call him Cullen. He had to line him up with a stump to see which way he was going. He was slow but he did about 3000 miles a year. He use to bring the vegetables and the fruit to Lottah and take them all around different places. He left and went back to China. He had a wife and family in China. He had been out here for years and years. It was remarkable because a lot of them had their wives and family back in China. He must have made enough money to go back. When some of them did go back, as soon as they got on the boat to go back they'd take so much back - money back they had to pay a pole(?) tax of about £100 to get there. It was an enormous lot for a Chinaman at the time. When they'd make enough money to go back they'd pay that money into the Chinese government and they'd live for the rest of their lives there. That was a tale I heard. I don't know if any of it was true. The people who saw them on the boat going back to China, they'd let their hair down. They were very happy that they were on their way home again. Of course you could understand that to.

APPENDIX 3B: ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW WITH TASMAN KINCADE

Miss Helen Vivian interviewing Mr Tasman Kincade 19-8-1983.

Mr Tasman Kincade

Born: 9th September, 1912 (72 years old) at Branhholm.

Present address: Binalong Bay

HV: To start off with, can you tell me when and where you were born?

TK: Born 1912, September 9th, at Branhholm.

HV: Did you live there most of your life?

TK: Most of it, except the odd times I was away working on the West Coast over in Victoria and Western Australia. It wouldn't amount to much more than four years.

HV: And your father, did he live in the Branhholm area most of his life?

TK: No. He was about 23 when he came to Branhholm. He was about 23. I think that's how old he was when he was married. He was married within 12 months of coming to Branhholm. The rest of the time he lived there right up to 1942, when he died.

HV: What sort of contact did you have with the Chinese in Branhholm?

TK: Well, growing up as a kid everybody sort of had the Chinamen. They were a bait for everybody's jokes. I suppose being like the other kids I looked at them. We used to "Ching-Chong-Chinaman", you would sing at him going down the street. Things like this. They baited them pretty badly I think. In my book they were very innocent and peace loving people. My first real contact with them was when dad started to work. After the mine shut down, the Arba mine shut down at Branhholm, dad had a little bit of plant of his own and he went in with Billy Ah Moy and his brother to take a tribute off part of the Arba Mine. Well, this was his first contact. Well they took two other Chinamen in with them. Do you want their names?

HV: Yes.

TK: Billy Ah Moy (Willy or Billy), Charlie (or Gemg) and then they had Ah Woo(?), Ah Wee(?) and another old chap who used to look after the water-race for them, Ah Yew(?). They worked on this tribute and shared it. According to their equity in it. Dad had his equity in it because he had so much plant. Bill Ah Moy had the most plant, so he had the biggest share. The two Chinamen, they took their share accordingly. Back in those days the money they got was pretty good because I saw slips where they sent money to China. There would be £30 and £40 at a time. Each time they would clean up and pay at about once a month. There would be £30 and £40 would go home to China. Back in those days £3 a week would be a lot of money. It was sent home to China to their families.

HV: How often?

TK: About once a month. They would mainly work in the winter months because there wasn't enough water in the summer. They used to dodge along and do all their dead work ready for next year. They would cut their own wood. Bill used to help dad cut the wood and dad used to help him cut wood. They would fill their own houses up with wood and the old Chinamen themselves, they didn't worry. They always carried enough home each night out of the mine to do them. They used to take old stink'n wet wood soaking from underneath the ground. They'd take this home and split it up into small sticks and they always had a great big fire place. They would put them up the chimney. They kept on putting the green stuff up and pulling the other from underneath. This is how they kept themselves. They were a

most enterprising people the Chinamen. They were. The knowledge that they had on various things and how they would approach things was really fascinating. They were really a very ingenious type of people. If a Chinaman was sick or something happened to him, he never rushed to the chemist, he went into the bush and gathered himself some of our local fauna and he made his own medicines.

HV: They made them themselves. Did they ever have a herbalist or a doctor?

TK: I believe they did get some of their own stuff in. They could mostly live off the land. Another thing about them they weren't like us. We get a nice job 300 bucks a week right'o. Well next week the boss says: "Oh well, I'll have to cut you back to 150 bucks a week". But the Union says: "No you can't have that". But they didn't have any Union. If they were making 300 bucks a week they lived fairly well. If they were making only 50 they lived accordingly. They got back to their bag of rice. They lived according to their means all the time, which is a big advantage over us I reckon. A lot of these things brought them in. To my way of thinking they were a pretty terrific sort of people. Dad thought a lot of them and they thought a lot of him. They even called him Ah Tassie because they thought so much of him. I reckon if anyone tried to interfere with dad in their presence they would not have survived. Christmas time there was about... Geoff had seven or eight kids, but there would have been about five of us kids then at home. My brother and myself and three girls. These Chinamen on Christmas morning had a heap of presents for us. Lollies and peanuts. Everything. Fruit. They would be real happy. They just adored kids. A lot of them had their families back in China. I don't know about the two fellows. I never got to their real history. But I do know they sent money back to their families. As I said, I saw this little pink slip. About that size, with the amount of money that they sent away.

HV: How did they send their money?

TK: I don't know, but I reckon it would be sent by some sort of draft because of this slip they got. It would be some sort of bank draft I would imagine.

HV: Was there a bank in Branhholm that would have dealt with it?

TK: It probably went through the Commonwealth Bank or the Post Office.

HV: They didn't have a head Chinaman or anyone who inspected it?

TK: They did up to a sense. They had their leaders who they looked to all the time. The fellow's in Branhholm didn't really have any real head, but there was always a fellow up around Weldborough area.

HV: Maa Mon Chin?

TK: I think he was one of their big fellows, Maa Mon Chin. There was also Charlie Hee Jarm, who was a pretty big fellow. I think Charlie was the fellow who ran the gambling school to. Rodney Chintock might be able to tell you this better than me. Dad of course, due to the fact that he worked with the Chinamen, used to be sort of half looked down upon by the community. They said: "Working with those yellow bellies. Who'd work with them". In no uncertain manner he told them he could trust them fellows but I doubt if I could trust you Australians. This way his way, but when the Tribute finally cut out, Billy Ah Moy and his brother went to Western Australia. They were pretty well off. They also had a brother-in-law in WA who had a pretty big business, in Geraldton, Sydney Fom. They went over there and invested their money in this business with Sydney Fom. Well to the best of my knowledge Bill Ah Moy is still there.

HV: He's still alive? When did he leave?

TK: 1926 I think.

HV: About the time of the flood?

TK: No before the flood. He was well gone before the Derby flood.

HV: That was 1929?

TK: Yes around about 1926. I was still going to High School anyway. Could have been 1927. Don't tie me to specific dates because I just can't remember them. 26 or 27 around about that year. Well he and his brother went over there. They still had a sister living in Branhholm. She was married to a white fellow, Eager.

HV: What was her name? That was Ah Moy's daughter?

TK: No Ah Moy's sister. There were six in that family. There were three boys and three girls. One boy died when he wasn't very old, 18 or 19 perhaps. But there were six in the family.

HV: They all came here?

TK: No. They were born here, all of them. Billy Ah Moy was born on Ruby Flats. That's the eldest.

HV: He was only half Chinese?

TK: No he was full Chinese. Their mother and father were full Chinese. This is interesting because old Ah Moy came out here possibly to the Gold Fields in Victoria in the first place. Then he headed to Tasmania and back in China (they still might do it) you were sold a wife when she was born virtually. They were sold to them and it probably cost him two pigs and a couple of goats, something like that. I don't know what changed hands, but they were sold to them. Well, this Mrs Ah Moy was brought over when she became old enough to be tied to him. She came here and she came to Scottsdale. The train line only came as far as Scottsdale then. She came to Scottsdale on the train. Well I believe the story goes that this old Ah Moy was about the ugliest man you could ever see in a days march. Well she was a very petite little thing and a nice little woman. I can remember her when she was still alive, but I don't remember the old man, but I remember Mrs Ah Moy. She was a neat little Chinawoman, with bound feet and all. She had little feet. She saw this fellow and I believe she cried for a week because she had seen this ugly old Chinaman but because it was a contract she still adhered to it. Can you imagine Australians adhering to a contract like that?

HV: When did she come out, do you know?

TK: I couldn't tell you that year. It was back before the turn of the century. Well Bill was born at Ruby Flat in 1893, so she had to be out well before that. Around about 1890 she came here. He was then working on Ruby Flat (the old Armoury(?)), where there was a lot of Chinamen working. They were either working their own little lease or they were working on Tribute. Well, he then took her to Ruby Flat and he built a bit of a store and he had a Chinese store.

HV: This was Ah Moy?

TK: Yes. He had this store supplying the Chinamen with their own needs, because they bought their own type of food from China. It was sent out here and packed up in pine boxes. The old man died and Billy Ah Moy himself shifted that store to Branhholm. He built a new house at Branhholm and when he built it, he put a great big room on it and that was used as a store for the few Chinamen that were left there. He had this great big room. Well that was the place that dad bought. When he went to Geraldton, dad bought the house from him and all his plant that he had on the mine. Dad bought that. Imagine that, bought a house and all this plant. Dad had two thousand odd feet of pipes. He had blowers, nozzles, blacksmithing gear, everything and he bought the whole lot for a £175.

- HV: Do you remember when Billy Ah Moy shifted the shop to Branhholm from Ruby Flat?
- TK: No I can't really tell you, but Ned Holmes might be able to tell you that. Get onto Ned if you can contact him, because Ned worked with him at once stage.
- HV: For the Ah Moys?
- TK: Yes. They had a horse and cart and Ned worked with the horse and cart. Ned would probably be able to tell you the year. I can't.
- HV: Not to worry. That's very interesting. There weren't all that many Chinese left at Branhholm at that stage?
- TK: When I was a boy, say 1924 or 25, I would be eight or nine then. I wouldn't be many more. There was old Ah Wee and his mates, Ah Yew, Lee Too, Ah Woo and Ah Wee and another fellow that came from Gladstone was there with them for a while Lee Yew and then there were two Ah Moy boys and two Ah Moy girls. There was a young girl Rosie. She was the youngest of them.
- HV: Can you remember the names of the Ah Moy kids?
- TK: There was Bill and Charles (or Gemg) and I think the other one was Harry (the one that died), they used to call him Bo. He was Harry or Bo. I am pretty certain his name was Harry. There was Mrs Eager.
- HV: What was her maiden name?
- TK: Gee, I have forgotten it. Emily. Then there was Nelly. She was on the mainland anyway. I think she was the one with Sydney Fom. She got married into the Sydney Fom clan. And then there was Rosie who was the youngest. Rosie would now be 77 or 78 now. I think she still lives in Melbourne. Mrs Eager has been dead for quite a few years now. Charlie Ah Moy had been dead for quite a few years. He died when he was about 18, 19 or 20. I don't know about the other one. I haven't heard of her in years. There could have been an extra one, but I'm not real sure on that because you see, these got away from the family and were on the mainland. So there could have been an extra one. There might have been seven in the family but six of them I knew.
- HV: And you think Bill is still alive in Western Australia?
- TK: Perhaps you would like to read this little note.
- HV: [Reading the note aloud] '...in regard to Bill Ah Moy, I can tell you that in 1980 he was living in Geraldton in WA and his youngest daughter Janice, was living in Perth WA. I have sent a copy of the above article to Miss Moy and perhaps you may hear from here. Her father will be 90 years of age if still alive. He was born at Ruby Flat in 1893". Well that's from Jim Smith.
- TK: I don't know who Jim Smith is.
- HV: He's got an address here on top of the letter.
- TK: Maybe you can contact him. As the mining gradually cut out, the Chinamen gradually disappeared. One Chinaman, while I was there, Ah Yew, died while I was there. Now this is an interesting ceremony when they are buried at the funeral.
- HV: Have you been to a funeral?
- TK: I have been to a Chinese funeral. This old Ah Yew, well when he died they laid him out in an old empty house, and they got the doctor and he considered him dead. They got a coffin and put him in and they got Jack Smith who had a horse and cart. They put the coffin in this and away they headed towards the cemetery. Immediately behind the dray was a Chinaman. They used to have long, great pieces of paper you know. They tore it off something.

HV: Was it coloured?

TK: Not necessarily. Mostly it was a rice type of paper. He would walk behind pulling off pieces as he went dropping them on the ground as he went. The other Chinamen would walk behind. "What's this for", said dad. "That keeps the spirits away, because by the time they pick all that paper up, he will be down in the grave and gone". That stopped the spirits from catching up to him. The bad spirits. They didn't mind the good ones. They got to the graveside. He was put down without a great deal of ceremony. They put him down and covered the grave in pretty quick. A couple of fellows shovelled in and covered him pretty quick. And then they laid out a great heap of candles and these sort of paper candles that burnt like an incense type of thing. This was on top of the grave. Then they put food along with rice. But previous to this, there was always money put in the coffin with him. That was to buy his way through the gates when he got there. I suppose you could call it toll money. That's why some Chinese graves in around Bendigo in later years were raided you see looking for the money. Originally it was always gold. Anyway this money was put in. They covered it in, they put all this on top and there was a great heap of food right along the top. They never ate it. It was left there and on top of the grave. The hobo's used to come along afterwards and raid it because some of it was pretty good stuff. There would be the Chinese fish and their rice. There would be all the best of stuff put on there. I don't know when they gathered up the bowls. This was always left there. Once that was off that was the end of it. It became virtually an unmarked grave. You would hardly see where it had been. I could take you to Bransholm now and you can hardly see where a Chinese grave has been. They took no more interest, once the body was gone that was it. It seems to me, that was the story. Some of them did put an iron fence around a couple of them, I suppose to keep them. Years ago I suppose, back in the early 1920s they did dig three or four skeletons up from the Bransholm cemetery and they boxed their bones up and sent them back. They wrapped them up and sent them back to China. Well that was a Chinese funeral. It was really very interesting. As a kid, as I say, you don't take this in. The more I think of it now, you know, well I think crikey that's something a lot of people wouldn't see, not here. But when you get down to the good and bad Chinamen they had the chap I told Geoff Wilson about, old Bo Wing. He was virtually a sort of a godfather. He tried to stand over the rest of them you see. All the Chinamen hated him but as a godfather, you know they still hold some power don't they? Like in Italy and all. They might be hated and they've got to watch themselves on every street corner. But this old Bo was like this. Well he was a bad old coot, no matter what way you looked at him he had no time for the Australian population whatsoever, but of course due to the fact his attitude towards them they tormented hell out of him. He used to chase the kids in the street you know and they would pelt him. And on top of that he was a bludger. He bludged on his own Chinese mates. He had an old fellow called Ah Soo. He camped with him. They had a log cabin over the creek from Bransholm towards the big hill it was.

HV: Do you know where that was today?

TK: I could take you with a chain or two of it. I'm not real sure where it was. It was burnt down in about 1924 or 1925. Well this old Bo used to sort of stand over all these other Chinamen if he could you see, but he couldn't stand over the Ah Moy's because they were a bit too knowledgeable for him, because they were English speaking. The Chinamen that were with the Ah Moy's, they could speak a few words of English. The Ah Moy's were English speaking, they spoke clearly just as well as you and I. There was no accent at all. This old Bo, he was a thieving old cow too, you see. He would pinch anything going. There were two or three Chinamen working their own bit of ground or fossicking in the Ruby heaps, all this sort of thing. This old cow if he could get it, would

pinch the bit of stuff they got you see. Well he went down to the station once and there was a load of stuff for Bill Ah Moy for the store. A few boxes of stuff. Well some way he conned the station master in, that some of the stuff was his that was in this. He conned him and got hold of his stuff and he unloaded all of it out and carried it home to his old camp. Well next thing Bill Ah Moy goes down and there was a fellow by the name of Chatters(?), was in the station then, and he said Bo came and got some of it. He said it was his. Well they take a policeman. Well they got most of the tin stuff down but anything that was perishable, the old cow had eaten it, but they used to get a lot of tin stuff. Rice and that sort of thing. Tin fish, sweet meats and a bit of their rice. But they got a lot of the stuff back. It didn't do him much good because at some later date after that he was heading home across the Branhholm Creek. In those days they would split a big sappling and just level the top of that and put it over the top of the creek. Well that was the bridge to walk over. Well there might be two of them side by side. Anyway he was going home with a sugar bag. Everybody carried stuff in a sugar bag then, even Australians. They'd always carry stuff in a sugar bag. He was going across the creek and some of the hobo's got in front of him and they got a handsaw and sawed up underneath it, and almost cut through it. He was going across this creek and it was in flood because there would be a lot of water going down, because of the mines working up above. Next thing poor old Bo's going down chasing his stuff down the creek. In he went and he's chasing his stuff down the creek. Well Geoff was really amused when I told him. He said that was...

HV: Poetic justice?

TK: I suppose it would be. Poetic justice would be the best word.

HV: You reckon the bridge had actually been sawn through?

TK: Oh yes they did. They could see it after. There was a piece lying there and it had been sawn. Two or three cuts up in it. They let the old coote down.

HV: It was just as well someone else didn't come over it.

TK: That's right. Well they knew he escaped of course. Well as I say nobody had much time for old Bo because he didn't co-operate much with the local people. Well there was another old fellow, old Ah Yew as I mentioned earlier. He used to grow a bit of vegetable. He would take this stuff around the town and sell it, his bit of vegetable. They had two baskets. He was only a little fellow he wouldn't be as tall as Stella, a little fellow. He wouldn't weigh 9½ stone. He was only a little fellow. He used to carry two baskets. Two great wicker baskets that I would nearly defy anyman to pick up. They were strong as ants you know. He'd get it up on his shoulders and he would bounce along. Half the time he had it and half the time he didn't. Nothing suited the hobo's better. He'd take this down to the town and they would sneak up behind him. One would get on one basket and one would get on another. They would give him a spin and the poor old fellow would be going around and around. You imagine that weight, because he couldn't stop himself. He would spin around and around with this. Around he would go and there would be vegetables around the place. This is the way they were treated. But as I say they were very inoffensive, they were law abiding, they didn't interfere with anybody who didn't interfere with them. All of them led a big long life and I'm not too sure...

[end of side one]

HV: Bill Ah Moy getting married to...?

TK: I don't know who the girl was but they were married, according to Backup in Bendigo.

HV: This is old Mr Moy?

TK: That's not the real old man, that's the son. That's the chap that dad worked with.

HV: He married a full Chinese girl?

TK: Yes a full blooded Chinese.

HV: Do you know who the...?

TK: No I don't know who the other's are. I think that one...

HV: So he would have gone to...? That says the 26/7/27, William and Ethel. That was his wife's name?

TK: Yes. No I don't even think that was his brother, because that's his brother there. No, I don't think that was his brother. That's his brother's wedding. I don't know who the people are in it because the wedding being away you see.

HV: She's pretty.

TK: She was. She was one of the prettiest girls I've ever seen. She had that real Chinese look, but she was still pretty. The strange thing about Chinese, a lot of them when they are young, you know it's only when they get old they get ugly looking. They're like Italians, they get ugly don't they. But you see Italian girls and some Chinese girls are terrific. But she was a really pretty girl. When they got old they got very haggard looking and they sort of walked with a slouch. When they would walk they would slouch along.

HV: This other photo, this is Bill's brother?

TK: That's Charles or Gemg. That's Bill.

HV: Do you know who the other people are?

TK: No I don't know any of those because he was married away. I'm not too sure but I think he married a girl from Melbourne. They were married in Launceston I think, or is this the one married in Bendigo?

HV: No this one says Bendigo, Bill's does.

TK: I don't know but this fellow could have been married in Launceston.

HV: Yes. The photograph is done in Melbourne. The Burlington, Melbourne.

TK: Is it, they must have been married in Melbourne then.

HV: It says: "With best wishes from Mr and Mrs C Moy, 1931". You met her did you? She came back to live in Branhholm?

TK: Yes.

HV: How many Chinese women were living in Branhholm then?

TK: She didn't live there. That was the time they went away. After they married they never came back. The same as Bill. He never came back. This was Bartlet Brothers, Bendigo. Well they must have been married over there somewhere as there were a lot of Chinese in Bendigo in those days. The same as Melbourne. There was a lot of Chinese, as I can remember being over there in 1934 and there was a lot of Chinamen around Melbourne then. But she never ever lived at Branhholm, nor Bill's wife. They were gone then over there. Due to the fact with the contact with dad, they kept him up with this. They kept in contact and even about five or six years ago Bill Ah Moy came back to Branhholm looking for

Mum and he came up and he found us and he came and had a cup of tea and he had one of the Chung Gon girls from Launceston and he came up and he had a cup of tea with us and a good old natter. He still kept contact with Mum all over those years. He always used to send a card and this is what I say about them. They were people that anybody who thought something of them, they really had a friend for life. So that nobody can ever say anything to me about the Chinks. Nobody.

HV: That was just six years ago?

TK: Yes about 5 or six years ago. Before we came down here. Not a great while before we came down here. He was a little tottery old Chinaman. But you got a job to tell a Chinaman's age you know. They still got their skin all full and everything. They never get that tattered old skin. There was an old fellow who used to live down the road from us at Branhholm, old Ah Doo and he had a hut on dad's property, but it was there in the first place when dad bought it, and old Ah Doo carried on there and that old fellow could have been well over 80 but he still had that yellow Chinese skin. Just like a bit of leather, but it wasn't shrivelled or anything like that.

HV: I wonder if I could get a copy of those, maybe take a photograph of them?

TK: Yes. But I wouldn't like to let them go away because they are too valuable. It's like the photos I gave my daughter. I said: "Well look, you can do what you like with them, but don't let them out of your sight, because people would make a grab for them you see". I wouldn't like to lose them because they are of great sentimental value. But you can take copies of them. Have you got a flash? Anyway you can take them tomorrow.

HV: I was going to ask you earlier, you were talking about your father working in with Ah Moy and these other four Chinese. You mentioned that they were working on a tribute system. What was the tribute?

TK: Well the company owned the lease. The Arba Company owned the lease. Well you took a tribute off him and you paid them a percentage. I think they were paying 15% of their gross to the company for the right to work on their leases. Well, if you had plant off them or you had used the Company's plant or used the company's water you paid 17½%. But they had their own water scheme, their own water race. It was all Alluvial you see. They had their own water race so they paid 15% of their gross. That was before expenses were taken out. They called it the tribute, but where the work came from I don't know. It goes way back in English history. You paid tribute for so much. There's another point you may want to catch to, while it's on. They used to have the old motion pictures. Silent films used to come into Branhholm then. An old fellow by the name of Berto used to bring these picture and he used to sit up and he wound the handle by hand to put the pictures through. These old comedies like earlie Charlie Chaplin's and Fatty-Ah-Buckle and so on. These old Chinamen used to line along the back seat. They always got along the back seat. They always went to the pictures. They'd line up along the back seat. There might be eight or ten or a dozen of them. They'd be nattering away and they'd laugh and cackle. They'd be nattering away amongst themselves because that end Chinaman would be talking to this end Chinaman and everybody seemed to understand one another. They'd be the same when they'd be walking through the bush. If there was eight of them they'd be in line one behind the other. They never walked side by side, always one behind the other. The back fellow would be talking to the front fellow and so on. They had tracks all about up through there. It's a shame now that a lot of these tracks are grown up. Up around Branhholm area and you go from Branhholm, walk through the Chinese track right across to the Cascade and through to Weldborough. All these old tracks they had.

HV: A separate track, it wasn't on the road?

- TK: Oh no it wasn't a road. A bush track going through. Dad used to go across with the Ah Moy's over to Ah Chung who had the store on the Cascade River and they used to walk from Branhholm over there, about seven miles. They would walk through to there. These pictures - they used to get there and really enjoy that. If there was a concert or anything like that on, the Chinese would always be there. They participated in our ceremonies the same as their own. Their own ceremonies of course were always important to them. Everybody turned up to them if possible. But they still participated in Australian ceremonies to. They would come along concerts or fairs. They would buy at the fairs. They were as I say very good living people.
- HV: Community minded?
- TK: That's right. They said, this where we belong so we will take part in it.
- HV: This period with the silent films you were talking about. When was that?
- TK: I guess it would be 1917, 18, 19, round about that time. During the war time right up to 1925.
- HV: It wasn't a very big population at that time?
- TK: It could have been up to a dozen of them. I think there was one or two, that up and disappeared. There might have been a dozen or more, up to 15. There was an English fellow by the name of Bonser who learnt to speak Chinese. He used to go sit at the back and talk away with these Chinamen all night. He'd sit at the back along with them. I can't think of his other name. I think it was Kelly.
- HV: Kelly Bonser?
- TK: Yes. I believe that was his name, but I'm not too sure. He used to sit down and natter with these Chinamen all night. I started to learn. They tried to teach me words when I was a kid. I started to learn a few of them. Quite a few words. Only thing about the Chinese language, there is no swear words in the Chinese language.
- HV: Aren't there?
- TK: No.
- HV:-- Can you be sure of that?
- TK: Well I think so. Why does somebody say there is?
- HV: No.
- TK: Well I 'm pretty certain there is no swear words. No real swear words. They have got their means of twisting words around. Marloo(?) was their worst word. I mean that meant you were really very bad. Marloo was the worst word that they'd say to you. But they had words for other things which could be like our Australian words that have been twisted around. They had all those. But I learnt. I used to get down there and sit and pick up something. I would say: "What's that, what's that"? They used to tell me. I never went on with it. I should have done, I know. I would have learnt quite a few. The only thing I did know, I could speak the Chinese one to ten.
- HV: You can still remember it?
- TK: Yes.
- HV: I'm trying to find here, there was a Chinese opera, but it was before the time that you could remember. It was 1893 when it came to Weldborough. It performed in a tent.
- TK: Also they had a small Joss House at Branhholm. Only a small one. The main Joss House was at Weldborough. They had a small Joss House at Branhholm. The building was pulled down. A chap bought the building and pulled it down and built it into a house which still stands. And they took all the interior fittings and the gods and everything out of it. They went to the

one in Weldborough which is now in the Museum in Launceston.

HV: Do you remember when the Joss House was pulled down?

TK: George Watt pulled them down and he came there in 1929 or 30. George Watt shifted it from Gladstone and he bought the place there at Branxholm and he pulled this down and built part of a room onto it. It was a room about 10 x 12. Something like that. Bo Wing got his old camp burnt at Branxholm. Well a fellow there, a miner bloke Rolly(?) Bonner got a little note book and he put a pound in it. He wrote on it that this fellow had been burnt out and he had no place to live in and he put a pound in it. He started off with a pound (20 shillings). That old cow went all around Branxholm. He went around Scottsdale, and he even went into Launceston and I believe at once stage that he was in Queenstown, because the cops shut him up and stopped him from collecting. He collected more than £100. When he got away from Branxholm, he told the people that he had a wife and 5 kids and they were up there starving and no place to live in. They were giving him money and he got more than £100 in this book. That was old Bo the godfather.

HV: That was a hell of a lot of money in those days!

TK: By gee I'll say it was! You take it as £3.00 a week. I don't even know what finally happened to him, I lost track of him. After that episode he never came back to Branxholm. From there he could have mucked around Launceston and probably he finished up in Melbourne and so on. He wasn't a real old Chinaman in those times. The old fellow that was with him, old Ah Soo, I think he died in Launceston.

HV: Just going back to this Joss House. Do you remember seeing this Joss House?

TK: I was in it.

HV: How often?

TK: I'd be about 8 or 9. Ten perhaps. I went up there once and they had a New Year festivity at this Joss House and I went up and ate some of the food. They had terrific cooks you know the Chinamen.

HV: Can you describe the Joss House?

TK: Well it was just a building. In the back of it were a whole lot of festoons. There were gods and coloured papers. A lot of hangings and little pictures. Always on the alter part of it. It has a double door opening like that in it. Narrow doors. As you went in there was a light which they kept continually burning on this alter. That I can remember pretty well. They had crackers there and all this sort of thing was in it. It would be in the Museum one now. Also we used to go as kids. Billy Ah Moy would take us up to their place for their Christmas festivities, which was a New Year. They had no god as we know it but they had their own form of worship, but not the gods as we know. Not our form of worship. They took us up and we used to have some terrific feeds that they would put on. Down at the back at the place we lived in at Branxholm, was an old Chinese cooking oven where they would roast a full pig. I wonder if it is still there?

HV: Right at the back of your place?

TK: Yes. It was built up with stone and clay.

HV: It would probably still be there unless someone has knocked it down.

TK: Well I don't know. It could have been knocked over. I wish it was still there. They have got one in the Moorina cemetery. You've seen it I suppose?

HV: Have you looked for it?

TK: No not in recent years.

HV: The Joss House, do you remember where it stood?

- TK: Yes. I can take you within a little more in the area of this house. There was a Chinese camp just over from a water race. Dad and Bill Ah Moy used it on the mine they were working. That's why this old fellow looked after the race you see. This old Ah Yew he looked after it because he was right on it. He used to walk around it and look after it and clean sticks and rubbish out of it. He made sure the water kept coming. He had bits of China and stuff that's there. It's a bit of a walk but I can take you near enough. The Joss House was built upon pegs. They didn't dig a foundation out. It was built up on pegs. Just on stumps. They didn't build anything really permanent, although a lot of them were there for a long time.
- HV: Did it have a wooden floor?
- TK: All wooden. Weatherboardsides. Iron roof.
- HV: Not split palings?
- TK: No. There was iron on the roof.
- HV: Would there have been very much stuff inside, or just a few things?
- TK: It was literally filled. You would walk in and it was all around you.
- HV: Do you remember the door way as you walked in, were there Chinese characters down the side?
- TK: As it opened up?
- HV: Yes.
- TK: I wish I had a picture of it. I know there was a lot of Chinese characters about. I would say they were on the door. I don't think there was any on the outside. As I can remember, I don't think there was a verandah on it. The one at Weldborough had a verandah on it and the Chinese characters were in that. On the door as it opened, they'd be down each side of the verandah. I can remember they had a lot of it about. They were always displaying their signs and everything pretty well.
- HV: That Joss House was there until about 1929?
- TK: Well say about 1929 or 30.
- HV: That's fantastic. That's why the people really haven't heard about that one.
- TK: It was only a small one. It was only a subsidiary of the big Joss House. They always gathered at Weldborough for the big celebrations.
- HV: Oh yes you mentioned the Chinese New Year at the Joss House.
- TK: Yes.
- HV: You were there one New Year?
- TK: It was either a New Year or some special celebration. I wouldn't say for certain that it was a New Year but some special celebration. I can remember as a boy about 8, going up there with Dad. Eight or nine I'd be I suppose at that time. We had this and they handed around all the little sweet meats and stuff. It was terrific, Chinese cooking. As kids, coming from school we used to pass the chaps that dad was working with. They'd camp one each side of the creek in their little huts and we used to come past and we would always call in and see them because especially if it was getting towards tea time, they'd have this toasted bread on top of rice and by gee it was terrific. It used to be done on top of the rice, and we'd go in as kids. You know how we'd want something, something. That was when I would see the old fellow smoking opium. He used to lay back on the bunk and smoke this opium. I watched him. He didn't take any notice of me watching him because me being dad's son, he wouldn't take any notice. They idolised kids you know. They thought the world of us kids. They used

to reckon we were bad boys sometimes. We used to even then we used to torment them a bit you know. They reckoned we were bad boys. You'd do something to him and he would make a run at you. He'd go to kick you. Even though we were friendly with them you see. They always looked on us kids as you know, as really family.

HV: Can you tell me a little about the opium smoking?

TK: Just exactly what do you want to know? The process?

HV: Anything you can remember about it.

TK: They had the opium. It looked like a real thick tree. It was in little fields made of horn. It was perhaps an inch and a half long by seven eighths of an inch across them. The top was fitted as neat as you could fit any medicine bottle now. It was all carved out of this horn. Well they used to get this and they'd have this little light burning with a bit of wax and a wick on it burning in a glass dome and the light would burn up through the glass dome and that kept the light nice and steady. They would get this opium and they'd get something like a fine knitting needle. It would be a 20 gage knitting kneedle. They'd get this. A big hat pin was a great thing they used to love. Those big old women's hat pins. They'd get this and poke this into it and twirl it around a bit and there was like a little knob on the end of it, about as nearly as big as a pea I suppose. They would hold it over this flame and they'd twist it around and around until they got it nice and suitable. But it just wouldn't quite run, to run off the needle. They'd get it nice and juicy, well not juicy but candly like. They'd get it to that stage. Well they would get a pipe. They'd get it on top of the pipe and they'd roll it around like this, put it over the flame and roll it around until they got a nice shape and they'd push it into the hole like that and try and withdraw the needle. If the thing came away they would try again. Sometimes it would take up to four or five minutes to do. Perhaps more. Eventually they would get it to stick there and they would pull it out. It had a hole through the middle and it stuck there. Then they would lay all this light in the mouth and they they would start to draw and let the flame go fair into that hole and they would draw. I don't think skin divers could take nearly as long as these fellows could. They'd just hang on and hang on, till they sucked all that in. The whole lot would be sucked in and he'd lay back and he'd let this plume of smoke go. Well it would half fill their cabin and it was a peculiar smell. I can still smell it you know. He would lay back and he'd [speech hard to hear]. My brother and I used to go and have a look at him and watch him. He never took any notice of us because we were part of the gang you see. But he was the only one I knew there. I think old Ah Doo, that was down below mums, I think he might have smoked a bit. I never ever saw him smoke it. But that's where I got the opium pipe from, old Ah Doo's. I got the complete opium pipe.

HV: What did it look like, was it like this smooth clay?

TK: Yes. It's really good clay isn't it? You look at that, it's finer than any China you can get.

HV: It's beautiful. It wasn't engraved in any way or decorated.

TK: No there didn't seem to be any markings on them. Even on the pipe itself. The stem was made out of a black type of bamboo. It was only about half an inch or five eighths on the outside, but they had a little silver sort of cup fitted on that and then fitted into the stem of the pipe. All their stuff was done with some method in it. They never did anything just for fun. The same as their water pipe. I used to call them tobacco wasters, their water pipe. They would suck on this. They would put a little bit of tobacco on it and they used to have quills of paper made up out of their Hang-mee(?) tea packets. They tell me that paper was infiltrated with opium. I've heard this but I couldn't prove this.

That paper would burn. They always had the little light. Always a wax candle with a wick burning in a heap of wax. That paper would burn. They'd light the old pipe and suck on her and suck until they got a great belly full of smoke then they'd let it go. As it would go the water would bubble and push the tobacco off. Partly burnt and partly unburnt tobacco. As they took that off they'd go like that and blow that flame out, but the jigger was still blowing. Well when they got another lot they would go, with a different blow and it would come into flame again. They had this, that would take the flame off but leave the flame blowing. It would be a blow like the end of a cigarette. Like that. That stuff would burn away and I believe it was infiltrated with opium or soaked in opium. But I can't prove that because an analyst would have to do something.

HV: You say it was the paper from a tea packet?

TK: From a tea packet. A Chinaman never threw anything away. They used to pee in a bowl, take it away and they'd break it down to 10 to 1 and pour it around their cabbages and vegetables. It would be broken right down. They didn't use their other. They always went away; they had their place. I believe in China they do. I believe all their excrement is all taken in paddy wagons and taken down. But they always saved their pee. They always had their little can under the bed and saved their pee in that. I've seen them do it. Now don't talk about the Chinaman being a dirty fellow. A Chinaman was a very clean bloke. He had an old can that didn't look very much, but they had a dirt floor. They never worried about putting in a board floor because that let the snakes get in underneath it. They always had a dirt floor and it was done up with the best gravel they could get around to keep. They swept it out everyday. They would have their tea and scour their pots. They always had the old cast iron pots. I've got two or three of them out here, they came from an old Chinese camp. They would turn them upside down on shelves. They had rows of shelves. Their plates always stood up on a shelf. When they went to cook their next meal they didn't take that pot down like we do and shove the stuff into it. That pot was scoured out again. They used to make those little round sags. They used to make brushes out of them. That was scoured out properly before they put any food in.

HV:~ What's a sag?

TK: Those little rush sags you see out in a paddock. Those little round things, that grow up so high. They are like little pins.

HV: Rushes?

TK: Yes little rushes or they would get a cutting rush, but they used to like them little round ones the best. They would get them and bind them tightly on a piece of wood and had it like a little scour brush about so long. Now before they put any food into that, that was always scoured out and washed out properly again. I'd eat a Chinaman's food off them any time because they were clean.

APPENDIX 3C: ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW WITH BILL GIBBONS

Miss Helen Vivian interviewing Mr Bill Gibbons 22-1-1984.

Mr Bill Gibbons

Born: 7th October, 1899 (85 years old) at Lefroy.

Present address: 125 Invermay Road
Launceston

HV: Could you tell me a bit about your own background. When you were born, where and about your mother and father?

BG: I was born in Lefroy.

HV: When were you born?

BG: 7th October, 1899.

HV: When would your earliest memories be of Lefroy. How old were you then?

BG: I can go back on different things. Back when I was quite small, different things that happened, I can go back.

HV: You lived in Powell Street in Lefroy?

BG: Yes. We lived in Powell Street and a year after or a couple of years after we lived on top of the Grammar School Hill. We lived there for a while. Then we came back to Powell Street again. We bought a place there.

HV: The Chinese or a lot of Chinese also lived in Powell Street?

BG: The Chinese lived at the back of us, then between our place and the Sand Creek.

HV: That was sort of on the corner of Shaw Street and Powell?

BG: No, right at the back of us, between our place, there was the Sand Creek, that ran from the dam, from the Battery dam, ran down to the back of our place ran right out and into the sea. Between Powell and the street that ran down past McLeans right down into the Currie Road.

HV: Was that George Street?

BG: I forget the names of the streets.

HV: How many Chinese lived in there?

BG: I can remember a lot of Chinese but I have forgotten their names. Chung Gons lived down the Back Creek Road. They use to call it Douglas Town. Down there where they lived. Ah Hungs had a big Chinese garden and fruit garden.

HV: How far from Lefroy was that?

BG: It was down the Back Creek Road. No distance you looked down from the Cemetery and then there was another Chinese, Kwok Sing. They lived lower down in the bush. They had a market garden then they went over on to the George Town Road.

HV: Whereabouts was there a market garden in Lefroy?

BG: On George Town Road, that was a part of Lefroy, a part of the township. There was another Chinaman lived just over the tram lines. What we call the tram line and the Currie Road.

HV: The tram lines went down behind the Battery and just before...

BG: Just down from Powell Street. It ran the back of Powell Street and the next street at the back it ran. That's where it ran down. The horses use to pull the trucks up and down on the line with the Quartz from the Pinnacle Mine to the Battery for crushing.

HV: And there was a Chinaman who lived right near the tram line?

BG: Yes, there was a Chinaman who lived and died there. I think he is buried up there at the cemetery in the corner.

HV: There is one Chinaman buried there called Kee Mon and that's the only Chinaman.

BG: Buried right in the corner?

HV: That's right. Right in the corner. Does that name ring any bell?

BG: Yes that's him. Isn't there another one at the side of him but no stone?

HV: No stone that's right.

BG: It use to have a little fence around it I remember in the corner unless the little fence has fallen down with age. The Joss House was up three house's up from us.

HV: Those house's aren't there any more.

BG: No. I know where they were, I can tell you what they were like.

HV: What was the Joss House like? What sort of building was it?

BG: It was a weatherboard building. In those days they were all weatherboard.

HV: Built out of split paling was it?

BG: Weatherboards not palings. All the inside I remember was painted pink. In it was an alter thing, bench whatever you call it. They had a Buddha, a big one in brass on the centre of it. Then they had all these images and animals a lot of brass ones. It was full of it. Then all around the walls was all their coloured streamers, balloons, Chinese lanterns, there were their bowls and their chopsticks standing up in the bowls. Chopsticks. I can see it now. All these things they had and the Chinaman was telling us one day and we were only kids and was telling us all these animals represented something to them. Lions and all those things.

HV: How big were the statues?

BG: Some were fairly big. The Buddha was fairly big, they call them a Buddha, he was fairly big.

HV: How big?

BG: About 18 inches. I suppose he'd be about that. He was round.

HV: Heavy brass figure?

BG: All brass. They had a couple of stone lions. Two big ones, dead solid in the garden. They use to have roasted pig there.

HV: When did they have that?

BG: They use to have a feast and the Chinamen use to gather and they had this feast on a wooden tray, with wooden handles each end of it. They use to carry it up on their shoulder. They use to beat the drums in there. That's all I can remember of the Joss House.

HV: How many drums did they have?

BG: One or two, only small ones and they use to beat it when they had the pig, they'd beat these drums.

HV: Where did they cook the pig?

BG: I forget where they cooked the pig. It was all nice and brown. There was a big oven just below it. It was a bake house at the time they cooked it in that.

HV: It wasn't a Chinese bake house?

BG: It could have been, before I could remember. That is all I can remember. They use to bake bread in it.

HV: What did it look like the oven?

BG: It was a big brick oven, it ran right back, it was all covered over, it was built in a building and it had a door, I suppose about this width.

HV: Was it a metal door?

BG: All brick, all brick across.

HV: Was it round or square?

BG: It was flat at the bottom like that and it was oval and that shape.

HV: Sort of like a bee hive?

BG: Yes, like a bee hive shape the oven was.

HV: Was it cylinder in the middle?

BG: It ran back a long way, it ran a good way because they use to bake bread. The people who had the bake house at the corner use to bake bread in it. They use to put it in a big tray, the bread and the dough on it and they shoved it in on big slides. [speech hard to hear] when I started to get bigger I can remember when men use to sleep in it. People of the name Partridges use to sleep in it.

HV: They had no where else to sleep?

BG: Yes, there was a family after the closing of the baker shop. Partridges went there to live. They had two bedrooms down in the fruit garden, they had bedrooms there, and the boys use to sleep in the other one after it closed down. They slept in there. That was after I started to grow up a bit. We use to go there as kids and play with them.

HV: And the fruit garden you were talking about, was that a Chinese one?

BG: No it wasn't a Chinese. What I can remember of it at first it was a fruit garden and there were like two rooms built half way down the garden, and they, the Partridges, that was the family who lived in it and they had this fruit garden but whether the Chinese had it before that I don't know. Those Chinese would be dead. The Chinese moved in and out [speech hard to hear]. They went down in the gold rush days whether that was right or not I don't know. There was a lot of Chinese. They use to go around and sell tea.

HV: Did they?

BG: They sold vegetables and that. They use to go around with basket on a yoke on their shoulder.

HV: Across or along that way?

BG: Sometimes they had them across their shoulder, sometimes one at the front and one on the back you know. I suppose what ever mood they were in, to carry them. They use to sell them.

HV: Did your parents buy tea and fruit off them?

BG: My grandparents use to buy tea.

HV: What about fruit and vegetables, did they sell their fruit and vegetables?

BG: Yes we use to go over to Kwok Sings and I use to buy them off Kwok Sings. They use to grow beautiful vegetables. We use to go there and the one further down before they went to George Town. I use to go there for the vegetables and things at Lefroy. I use to go down with a sugar bag.

HV: That was the one on Back Creek road?

BG: No that was the one over at George Town.

HV: How many Chinese were there in the town when you were young?

BG: I suppose four or five.

HV: And they were all market gardeners at that time?

BG: All market gardeners.

HV: So all the miners had gone?

BG: The miners were still there working. The Chinese had moved and then there were springs(?) way down all way down, that's where they use to go for water when the summer time was on. They use to call that the Chinese spring.

HV: Did they?

BG: Chinese spring. People use to go there for water.

HV: Why did they call it that?

BG: I don't know they always use to call it the Chinese springs.

HV: Where were they?

BG: That was down the side of the Sand Creek.

HV: I'll show you an old map of Lefroy would you like to see one, it's a very old map. 1910 it was drawn up and it's not a very good reproduction. [speech hard to hear]. That's Talings(?) down there and another one there. That's the Native Youth Battery in here.

BG: That was near the Battery the Native Youth.

HV: That's a tramline running down front here, that's Powell Street.

BG: Yes.

HV: That's Shaw Street.

BG: I was talking to my sister. Shaw Street was the main street that ran up past Grey's and I'm not sure of that. Richard Street ran up past the school and the church and if its the other way Richard Street ran up what was Shaw Street.

HV: That's Richard Street, there's the school as you said [speech hard to hear]. And there was a garden here it says, Richards Garden and Shaw Street there, that's the main street now that's where the shop is now, that's the main road goes through the Pipers River.

BG: Goes on to the Piper?

HV: That's the slaughter house, I don't know if you remember that.

BG: It goes down onto the George Town Road, was it?

HV: No, that's Shaw Street, the main street, that goes down onto the Pipers River that way and I can't quite work this one out.

BG: They've built this since I lived there, we lived there, this slaughter house I don't remember that.

HV: It's a very old one this is 1910, I think and it might have been pulled down or it might be 1904 and that is Powell Street, so where was your house?

BG: Where's Shaw Street, this is Shaw Street, we'd be down there.

HV: On this side?

BG: Yes it was on that side.

HV: So you'd be one of these four cottages probably?

BG: Yes, when I first can remember, way down here this is... What street is this one?

HV: Myrtle.

BG: Way down here were people by the name of Markings(?) lived away down there and then you come up and there were people by the name of Richardsons. After they shifted the house was pulled down. We always called it Markings [speech hard to hear] and then we come up to Richardson's there was another house there, and then there was my grandmothers and then there was the place I was born in and then there was our place, before we went to the Grammar School then there was a chap who lived in a hut next to us and his mother, sisters and father and the rest of the family lived in the house next door. Then there was the Joss House.

HV: The Joss House was there?

BG: Yes the Joss House was there.

HV: Right on the edge of the street?

BG: Back in the garden, in the yard there was a fruit garden there and the Joss House was in the fruit garden. And then there was a big blacksmiths shop, the bakers shop right on the corner. Corner of Shaw Street and you went into the shop corner ways and then when you came over to this corner there was a corn store. This was a yard down there with a big gate that went into the shop on the main street. Then there was another shop there which was a carpenters shop, Mr Aitkens(?). Then there was a big grocery shop then there was a bakers shop. The bakers shop use to have a garden. Then there was a roadway that went down into the yard [speech hard to hear]. Then there was a butchers shop.

HV: Does this have a cemetery on it?

BG: Yes.

HV: So you lived about there?

BG: Yes.

HV: And the Joss House was about there?

BG: Yes.

HV: And there was a Chinaman living on this tram line?

BG: Between there and down this next street there was a tramline and he lived down below the tramline on the next street down.

HV: That's the street there, that little dotted line?

BG: Yes.

HV: They had a fruit garden?

BG: Yes the Joss House stood in the fruit garden.

HV: How far off the road was the Joss House?

BG: No distance, about as far from our front gate to the front door.

HV: So there has been a house built over the site - a cottage?

BG: Yes, a Mr Triptree built a house. Our house was pulled down after we left there and he built a cement place if I'm not mistaken. I'm not sure but I think they built one on my grandmothers place.

HV: Do you remember the Joss House being pulled down?

BG: Yes, I remember it being pulled down. I think somebody just bought it and put timber or something on it. There were a lot of houses pulled down and taken away. They use to get Warren Phillips and they use to put them on the big lorry thing and take them away. A lot of people (the farmers) bought a lot of places and took them out onto their farms on to their paddocks.

HV: How old were you when the Joss House was pulled down?

BG: I'd be going to school.

HV: Nine or ten?

BG: I went to school when I was seven. Yes I suppose I would be ten. I was going to school, but I don't remember exactly how old I'd be [speech hard to hear]. I remember so many houses being pulled down and taken away in my school days. They closed down the big shop right on the corner, the baker shop, that was taken out onto the Piper Road. It was put out on a farm out there. Then there was another big place down the Currie Road, before you got to the Methodist Church, that was taken to where you go down to Tamoshanter Bay and it's still there. [speech hard to hear] I was grown up when the Catholic Church was taken down and taken away. That's years after we were living in Launceston that they were taken away the Church of England Church and the Roman Catholic Church, they were pulled down and taken away and also the Methodist Church was pulled down and taken away and the big Sunday School was taken away.

HV: There is hardly anything left there now.

BG: Oh Lefroy was a big place. I can remember, I go all through Lefroy and tell you what place after place, all the way along the street and I can tell you what they are and all were and what I can remember of them. There were a lot of people there when I was a kid. The mines were working you see, when I was a boy there, the mines were working.

HV: But there weren't any Chinese working on the mines at that time?

BG: No I don't remember Chinese working there, they had the gardens, the fruit gardens and vegetable gardens.

HV: You described to me the time when they had the roast pork and there was a ceremony and you saw the pork. How did you get to see that ceremony, was it open for everyone?

BG: We were sticky beaks. You know what kids are. That's how we saw that because we use to go up there for dinner to the Chinamen, to talk to them.

HV: Did they speak English?

BG: Oh yes they could speak English, but they would yabber in their way you know the Chinamen.

HV: So you use to go up there and chat with them and talk with them?

BG: Oh yes we use to love to go up there and have a look in the Joss House. They use to let us have a look in the Joss House. They didn't shut it up from us.

HV: Did they ever have a rocking horse, do you remember that? You probably wouldn't remember that?

BG: No they could have had it and I didn't see it you know. I can't remember the rocking horse.

HV: What about dolls, Chinese dolls?

BG: Chinese dolls?

HV: Yes.

BG: Chinesedolls. There were all kinds of images you could think of you know that they had, not only animals they had all kinds of things there and they were all clustered up close together not separated out like we would separate out things, they use to cluster them all up close together.

HV: Did they have a verandah on the front of the building?

BG: Yes, along the front of it just like the building along there and then they had this verandah thing over the front of it.

HV: Facing the street?

BG: No facing in the garden, the end of the building was towards the street.

HV: It was facing away from the street?

BG: Yes facing away from the street. It was facing more into the garden.

HV: How big was it?

BG: It wasn't a big place, it was long. It wouldn't be that wide either what I can remember of it. I suppose it would be the length of our hall there, it would be the length of that.

HV: A fair length isn't it. That's what, about 40ft?

BG: It would be I suppose the width from that wall over to this one, would be about the width of it.

HV: What would you say 40 x 30?

BG: 25ft I reckon. 25 to 30. It was in a fruit garden, there was a fruit garden all around it.

HV: What sort of trees did they have?

BG: Apple trees, plum trees.

HV: Did they have many?

BG: Pear trees. Yes it was full. Rows of them.

HV: So they must have been there quite a while to have the trees there?

BG: Oh yes they were there a good while. I suppose they were there before ever I was born. I don't know how old Lefroy even really was.

HV: I think the first people started going there to mine in the 1860's.

BG: Yes it would be pretty old. Lefroy would be an old place. I used to go up to the Battery, when the Battery was working and I used to go and watch them. I've seen the gold laid on like flannel when they would be delivered the water would run down over it, it was just like flannel all laid out and the water used to go over the top of it because all the gold and sand used to catch on it somehow. It used to go over it and out and down out towards the Native Youth Mine. I used to watch it I used to catch on it bits of gold.

HV: When you went and watched that ceremony where they had that roast pig, how many Chinese would have been there?

BG: I suppose seven or eight of them I suppose there would be. It would only be a small roast not a big roast, that they had between themselves.

HV: You don't remember what time of year it was?

BG: No, I don't.

HV: Do you ever remember them having any fire crackers?

BG: Well there was always fire crackers on for everything at Lefroy. Everybody used to go in for crackers. There was all those whirly wheels and all like that, that they used to put on them poke things. Lefroy was always a place for crackers, fire works and all kinds of rockets and all those things. They use to have kites and Chinese lanterns [speech hard to hear]

light with a candle in them and all those things.

HV: A candle inside a kite?

BG: A candle inside a thing just a light you know, just send it up, because if it caught fire it made no difference to it.

HV: And how often did they do that?

BG: Chinese didn't do it. It was the people who used to do it because they would always have their tails on the kites you know and they'd have a Chinese lantern on the end of it to add a bit of colour when the wind blew it up. They had big long balls of string, and if they lost the kite they'd make another one. We use to make many kites when I was a kid.

HV: The market gardeners, did any of them have a horse and cart for selling their...?

BG: No I don't remember. Nearly everyone had one at Lefroy. There was one Chinese, Mr Kwok Sing. He used to have a horse and cart, and he used to go fishing and he used to sell the fish.

HV: Did he sell it fresh or salted?

BG: Fresh fish.

HV: Where did he go to do his fishing?

BG: Around the streets selling. People used to buy it off him.

HV: Where did he catch the fish?

BG: I don't know where he use to go for them, to the river somewhere but where I don't know. Down the Tamar River I suppose. He use to sell fresh fish so I suppose he'd go down to the Pipers River for the fresh water creeks. He could go to the Curry River, the Pipers River, [speech hard to hear] everywhere because there's fresh fish. I think he used to go to the mouth of the Piper. What we call the mouth of the Piper they call the Piper, Heath(?) now, down there.

HV: What happened to him, did he leave Lefroy?

BG: He came to Launceston, they had a market garden out towards Carr Villa Cemetery. He died out there.

HV: Can you remember where that market garden was, did you ever see it?

BG: Out Carr Villa?

HV: Yes.

BG: It was up off the Hobart Road out Kingsmeadows. It's all built over now, just past the hotel.

HV: Which hotel was that?

BG: The Kingsmeadows hotel up on the bank, it was out there and then there was one this side of the hotel. He was living in that one or the one over the other side, but I know he was out there for years because we used to see him.

HV: When did you last see him?

BG: He was still there when I went to Melbourne to live for 33 years. He must have died while I was away.

HV: How old were you when you went over to live in Melbourne?

BG: Twenty five.

HV: This other chap, Ah Hung on Back Creek Road. Do you remember what happened to him?

BG: He died. I think he's down in the Lefroy cemetery I think.
Yes he is.

HV: Do you remember his funeral?

BG: No I don't remember the funeral. But I remember Mrs Ah Hungs.

HV: Do you. When was that?

BG: She was a white woman Mrs Ah Hung and she had two sons and a daughter.

HV: Were they about your age?

BG: No they were older. One was Henry. Henry came to Launceston years after they left Lefroy and he was the gardener at the Launceston General Hospital. I don't know what became of Syd.

HV: Syd was her other son?

BG: Mary went over the other side (Mary Ah Hung) and she married a Chinese and they lived on the other side.

HV: You don't remember who she married?

BG: I think I could find Mr Ah Hungs grave at Lefroy if I was down in the cemetery. It's got a little stone in it, an iron fence around it and a stone. A flat stone, a marble stone. I think I could find it I tell you. All I remember is Mrs Ah Hung going there and putting flowers on his grave. I think I could find it if I was down there.

HV: When did he die?

BG: He died years, when he died. I just can't remember when he died. They had a beautiful garden. Fruit garden and vegetable garden. It was a big place.

HV: Did they have water on the property?

BG: Black Creek runs through.

HV: Black Creek?

BG: Black Creek.

HV: So they did quite well for themselves did they?

BG: Yes they had all their own water and everything.

HV: Did he sell his vegetables?

BG: Yes everybody use to go there and buy them. Buy the fruit and vegetables. You could go there and get it or they would hawk it around.

HV: You don't remember who his daughter Mary married?

BG: No I don't know who she married.

HV: There was a chap called Jack Ah Quor. Do you remember him?

BG: Yes Jack Quor. Well that Jack Quor they changed their name from Kwok Sing to Quor. Their real name was Kwok Sing. I first remember them as Kwok Sing. Why they changed it to Quor I don't know. Jack's dead. He worked at the Council.

HV: Which Council?

BG: The City Council.

HV: Launceston?

BG: Yes Launceston. A lot of people would not remember them as Kwok Sing, but I remember them as Kwok Sing. Some people use to call them Sings. Their real name was Kwok Sing.

HV: What was his job on the Council?

BG: He worked on the roads I think.

HV: Was he married?

BG: Yes.

HV: To a European?

BG: He was married and his wife died I think he had a couple of children.

HV: What was his wife's name?

BG: I don't know. I know where his wife is buried at Carr Villa. But I don't know nothing of the children.

HV: He was there longer than the Ah Hungs was he?

BG: No the Quors were. He wouldn't remember the Quors. He's years younger than me.

HV: The Quors?

BG: Yes he's years younger than me. Jack Kwok Sing, I remember Jack and Mrs Kwok Sing or Mrs Quor as you might like to call her. I remember them and some of the children being born. I use to go to school, Mrs Quor had a daughter before she married the Chinaman, she had a daughter. She was very pretty.

HV: The daughter?

BG: Yes she was very pretty and I went to school with her. Well I went to school with some of their elder ones. I went to school with them.

HV: How did they get on at school the half Chinese?

BG: They didn't show that much. The didn't show Chinese at all much.

HV: They looked European?

BG: They looked more like us than Chinese.

HV: Did people pick on them at all?

BG: No.

HV: Didn't tease them?

BG: No never. Nobody knew better than us. It was too strict. You couldn't do that. No we never picked on any one, they went to school the same as us. Never ever thought of it to tell you the truth.

HV: What about Jack Quor and Mr Ah Hung. How did they get on with the Europeans?

BG: They were just like us. No one bothered, they were all respected and looked up to. No one picked on them or nothing like that. They got on with everybody. Everybody was friendly and sociable. No there was none of this business like we are today. You go picking on one and the other. Your this and I'm that. There was none of that. We were all a friendly lot together, everybody.

HV: Do you remember any of the other Chinese?

BG: No I wouldn't remember. I'd forget about them. I can't remember the one that lived at the back of our place. I can't remember their names. I can remember the garden.

HV: How many lived there?

BG: How many were there? Gee there was a family of them. They moved out to. I was so young when there was so many Chinamen there. I was so young.

HV: About how many Chinese lived behind your place?

BG: Only the one family right at the back of us. There was only one.

HV: Did he have a European wife as well, or a Chinese wife?

BG: European wife and two children. A lot of Chinamen, what I can remember they were single. They just came there to work. They were single.

- HV: At this ceremony that they had, did their wives go when they had the roast pork?
- BG: No only the Chinamen. I can only remember the Chinamen going. I can only remember the Chinamen themselves at the Joss House. We were just school kids.
- HV: How did they treat you when you came?
- BG: We used to go get away you know. We never stopped and watched them what was going on. That was the only time I saw the pig. The once, I never saw it again. But I never seen what they did inside. I never seen at all. Where it was baked I couldn't tell you. Whether it was baked in that oven next door I couldn't tell you. I just imagine it would be because I wouldn't know where else they'd do it.
- HV: Was it a big pig? A whole pig?
- BG: Head and all was on it and they had it on a long rod thing. What they went on with, their nonsense and all that I didn't understand. That was the only ceremony I saw there. I saw all their images and animals.
- HV: Because you went in it at other times did you?
- BG: Many a time I'd been in. What they did with all their things after I don't know. When the Chinamen moved away there was no more to it. They just seemed to vanish away.
- HV: Once there was quite a few there.
- BG: They said, before I could remember that Lefroy was full of them. They all went there. They always use to say that the Chinamen followed the gold rushes.
- HV: Do you remember your parents telling you any stories about the Chinese?
- BG: No.
- HV: Had they been at Lefroy long before you were born?
- BG: No. Mum was really a Launceston born. She was really born in Hobart and lived in Launceston all her life. My father, he was back at [speech hard to hear] Pipers River, born in George Town and father and mother had the farm at Pipers River.
- HV: Did the Chinese have long pig tails down their back?
- BG: No, I don't think they had pig tails.
- HV: Did they wear hats?
- BG: Yes.
- HV: Always?
- BG: Yes they wore hats. You never saw a Chinamen without a hat on. They always had a hat, a big hat. They'd be out in the garden working and they always had a jacket on.
- HV: A straw hat?
- BG: No, felt hats. Old slash hats what we used to call them.
- HV: Wide brims?
- BG: No just ordinary felt hats or any old hat that they'd wear out in the garden. Sometimes they'd have their coat out in the garden. Sometimes it would depend on the weather. Mostly they would wear Tasmanian flannell stuff, the Blues.
- HV: What sort of jackets did they have?
- BG: Just ordinary, straight down. Just an ordinary jacket. Straight round the bottom, not much shape in them.

HV: Not a suit jacket?

BG: No.

HV: Cotton?

BG: Cotton stuff.

HV: Chinese probably.

BG: Just to knock about. Bluies is what they called the trousers. Dungarees or moleskins. What they call moleskins. Moleskins are different now to what the moleskins were years ago. Still materials are different now to what they were when I was a kid. Moleskins now, they wear trousers now different moleskins to what we had when we were kids.

HV: What were they like when you were...?

BG: They were a different material. They were more of a softer material. They weren't that stiff material more a softer material moleskin. The same with the dungarees. They call them jeans now. They were dunagrees when we were kids. The jackets use to be galatere(?). You wouldn't know what galatere(?) was?

HV: No.

BG: Striped material we use to wear them. We use to have trousers and coats made the same. We use to wear them to school, a real tough material. Galatere(?). They were spotted with all different lines and stripes on them. You don't hear of it now.

HV: No I've never hear of it.

BG: They were awful, galatere coats. They use to make seats out of them and all. You could wash it and iron it and wear them back to school or anything. When we were kids we never wore long trousers like they wear now. We always wore socks up to here and turned down at the tops. And trousers only came to there or else you'd wear them down and button them there. They'd call them apple catchers. They have none of that now. Things were different when I was a kid. Different altogether

HV: Getting back to the Joss House, it was weatherboard on the outside.

BG:-- Iron roof.

HV: Did it have a chimney?

BG: No.

HV: Did it have windows?

BG: Yes in the front of it. Windows in the front, under the verandah. None at the back and none at the end. Just at the front of it.

HV: On either side of the door?

BG: On both sides of the door

HV: Did it have a wooden floor?

BG: Yes.

HV: Were the walls lined on the inside?

BG: They were lined. It was pine lined. It was tongue and groove pine.

HV: It was really quite a smart building?

BG: Yes it was a nice building. I can always remember the pink paint inside.

HV: So it was pine lined with pink paint?

BG: Pine lined, painted pink.

HV: Was the ceiling pine as well?

BG: Yes the whole lot . was pine all over.

HV: Did it have any support columns?

BG: No, none at all.

HV: The roof was just a normal...?

BG: That shape the roof was, it went down, it was that shape. A big hall, whatever you like to call it with a verandah in front of it, it was all in one. One roof did the lot.

HV: Do you remember what sort of vegetables they used to grow?

APPENDIX 3D: ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW WITH BRIAN SHEAN

Miss Helen Vivian interviewing Mr Brian Shean 12-10-1983.

Mr Brian Shean

Born: 1921 (63 years old) at Garibaldi.

Present address: 21 Ringarooma Road
Scottsdale

HV: An interview with Brian Shean at his house in Scottsdale on the 12-10-1983. When were you born Brian?

BS: 1921.

HV: Where?

BS: In Launceston. The family weren't living in Garibaldi then [speech hard to hear].

HV: But your family was living in Garibaldi at the time?

BS: Yes. Well if you want to be particular it was the Argus where we lived.

HV: And your parents, what was your fathers name?

BS: Peter Shean.

HV: And your mother?

BS: Iris.

HV: Do you remember her maiden name?

BS: Seen. She was at Beaconsfield first.

HV: Where was your father from originally?

BS: He was born at Lefroy in the goldmining days. Born in 1882.

HV: Do you remember your grandfathers name?

BS: No only what I've been told about him. He died in the late 1890s. About 25 years before I was born. They shifted to Beaconsfield soon after he died. About 12 months or so after he died.

HV: His name was Him Shean?

BS: Well as far as I know he was Him Shean. Sometimes the Chinese family, like the part Chinese family took the father's full name as their surname. Such as Chintocks would be full. Our people were familiarly known as Him Shean. It was always spelt Him Shean but somehow or other the Him got dropped [speech hard to hear].

HV: And your grandmother, what was her name?

BS: She was Glover.

HV: Where was she from?

BS: Well I don't know. She must have been living at Holwell somewhere just out of Beaconsfield.

HV: So your grandfather was full Chinese?

BS: Yes.

HV: Your father was born in Lefroy?

BS: Yes.

HV: How long did he live there?

BS: Not long, he was still in the cradle when they came out to the North East area. They went to Boobyalla on the coastal steamer.

HV: From Lefroy?

BS: Yes from Lefroy.

HV: Where did they go from Boobyalla?

BS: To Moorina. They lived in Moorina for about seven years. There was a lot of Chinese in Moorina then.

HV: And your father was not the only child in the family at that time?

BS: Oh no there were six boys.

HV: Six boys?

BS: Yes.

HV: No girls?

BS: Yes four or five girls.

HV: Was he the eldest?

BS: No there was a girl and a boy older than him. I have a photo somewhere. This is Auntie Powell.

HV: Auntie Beck who became Mrs Powell and Uncle Bill...

BS: She was the eldest.

HV: She was the eldest right. What became of Uncle Bill?

BS: Well his wife is still living next door, but they never had any children. She helped us out when we lost our mother.

HV: Did they? Do you think his wife would remember very much about the Chinese?

BG: Not a lot I don't think. She might. She might remember some of the names, that's about all.

HV: Would she have any other photos which you haven't seen?

BS:- No. We have photos of dad and his brothers around here. Next to the three of them are him. That's about 100 years old.

HV: How old would your father be there. Four or three?

BG: No. I'd say that was taken soon after they went to Moorina. I showed that to the dentist up here. He's Chinese. Well he's racial Chinese but he comes from Indonesia. As soon as he saw this he saw this dragon motif we never noticed it.

HV: It's beautiful isn't it?

BS: Yes. That's the old chap. As you can see he's got the European clothes there.

HV: Quite young at the time there to.

BS: Actually he was a fair bit older than them. He was 56 when he died in the middle 1890s. My old grandmother had just had a child, so she wouldn't be more than 40 odd.

HV: No.

BS: He was fairly big for a Chinese they say. He was 5' 10".

HV: Are these the only photo's you have of them?

- BS: Yes. Well we have some grown up photos with some uncle's and aunties with them.
- HV: They would be interesting to see to. These are terrific. I would like to get copies of these made for the Museum.
- BS: Well, what we are hoping to do, as you can see my grandmothers face has gone. We are hoping to get that transferred. The photographer had a look at it. He says he can see enough of the chin and the mouth to locate... She died in 1940. She was just 80 or 82.
- HV: That was a good innings.
- BG: Yes, it was a good innings. Dad reached 89.
- HV: Have you still got the originals of these photos?
- BS: My sister in Launceston has got them.
- HV: Right. Which sister is that.
- BS: Delma Homan. She lives in 37 Foster Street.
- HV: She is older than you.
- BS: Yes 10 years older than me.
- HV: Where did your father meet your mother?
- BS: In Beaconsfield.
- HV: When did they get married?
- BS: 1899. Well perhaps I had better explain. What I tell you was only given to me by word of mouth. No doubt we could find the marriage licence.
- HV: They were married in Beaconsfield?
- BS: Yes.
- HV: Was your father working in the Mines there. The gold mines?
- BS: Yes he worked in the stoke hole mastering the big boilers.
- HV: Did he?
- BS: A stoke hole. I don't think he ever worked under ground much. My other uncles did.
- HV: Did they? Was that on Brandy Creek as it was known then? It would have been Beaconsfield by then.
- BS: Tasmanian Gold Mines. Dad got out of work early this century and he pushed a bike up around this area looking for work.
- HV: That was after he was married?
- BS: No.
- HV: Before?
- BS: He basked up here for a while and then went back to Beaconsfield and got married.
- HV: How long was he pushing around here looking for work?
- BS: He rode the bike from Beaconsfield through Avoca and Fingal...
- HV: All on gold mines then?
- BS: Yes. He set off from Mathinna and came over here to Ringarooma back home.
- HV: Did he ever do any searching for gold himself?

- BS: Not on his own I don't think. There was a bit of gold in the tins.
A bit of gold there.
- HV: They made it themselves?
- BS: No they got it made.
- HV: So after he was married did they stay in Beaconsfield?
- BS: No. They came back here.
- HV: To where?
- BS: Garibaldi, or the Argus what ever you like to call it.
- HV: How long did they live there?
- BS: All the time. Mum died in 1924.
- HV: Until they died?
- BS: Yes. Dad came down here for his last few years that was all. He spent his last eight or ten years here.
- HV: They weren't married long then.
- BG: No 15 odd years.
- HV: You were born soon after they moved to Garibaldi?
- BS: No, my elder sister was born after we moved to Garibaldi. She was born in Beaconsfield. Mum went back to the old home. But actually the home was at Garibaldi. She really never moved away from Garibaldi.
- HV: Would she have been only one of the European women living at Garibaldi at the time?
- BS: No not in those days. A lot earlier there might have been. There was dad's mother and there were other European women who married Chinese. They lived out there.
- HV: How many?
- BS: I've often tried to gather all the names up. They're sort of coming and going. There was Lee Wongs(?), they lived there. Their mother was European. You probably know Chintock?
- HV: Yes, well I didn't know him but I know of him.
- BS: Well she married Arthur Chintock. One of the Lee Wong girls married Arthur Chintock. There was Chee Wong(?). His family was half-cast. There were only two boys [speech hard to hear] and George. George lived in the Derby Mine. Up there at the football ground.
- HV: Did he? He mined there did he?
- BS: He was a master blacksmith. That's where Ah Moy lived, up there.
- HV: In Derby?
- BS: Yes. He didn't live at Garibaldi much although he use to come around here in a horse and cart.
- HV: Who was that Ah Moy?
- BS: Yes.
- HV: Why did he come around in his horse and cart.
- BS: Well he was selling vegetables. [speech hard to hear] he was half-cast. I don't know if his mother lived there or not. His father had been living there, but I don't think he was born there, I think he was born at the mainland. His father brought him over here. There was Sing Why(?).

There was Mrs Sing Why. I'm not sure if she was Chinese or not. I don't think so. I've never heard of any Sing Why children. There is written records of them where they took up mining leases.

HV: I have.

BS: One old chap there was Ah Pack(?). You will find him in the mining leases as Ah Park.

HV: I'm sure the names must get mis-spelt terribly.

BS: The last three at Garibaldi. They got an old aged pension. The local council did give them [speech hard to hear]. There is records of that in there.

HV: Who were the last three Chinese?

BS: There was Ah Loo, Ol Will(?), Ah Poo(?) and Ah Moy.

HV: What about the character known as Sharky...?

BS: He lived at the far end of Pioneer. Just where you turn off to go up there. That's where Pioneer started.

HV: He's the one with the white beard wasn't he?

BS: I just can't remember him.

HV: You don't remember him having a beard?

BS: No, I think he use to sell fruit. How he came to be called Sharky I don't know. Whether his name was Shar Kee I don't know. I just remember him as Sharky. Sometimes that Kee is a company name. You often see shops and businesses with Kee. At Garibaldi there was a shop keeper referred to as Sun Dan Kee. But dad told me it was just Sun Dan. Kee was the company name.

HV: People misunderstood it?

BS: Yes. There was a family of half-casts. There were two. Old Charlie died a couple of weeks after we got up there. He died in Queensland.

HV: I heard about him.

BS: Back in 1933 or something. He never had any boys, he had all girls. So his name went with him. They lived mostly at Gladstone and this Moy that they brought back from Braxholm he was born in Gladstone the same. And the Lee Fooks, their home was always in Gladstone. I'm sure someone else is still alive. As far as I know Charlie is still alive.

HV: Do they live in Tasmania?

BS: Yes, I think so. Mrs Albert Lord lives in Launceston. She's one of them. [speech hard to hear].

HV: He has recently come to Tasmania?

BS: No he was born here. As far as I know he was. There were some lots of half-casts that didn't actually belong there. The Lee's family never belonged to Garibaldi. He came over from the mainland somehow. I don't think he stayed here long. As far as we know he finished up in Ballarat.

HV: So these last three Ah Poo, Ah Loo and Ah Moy, you actually remember them?

BS: Yes I remember them.

HV: Are they the only Chinese that you remember meeting?

- BS: No I can remember each one and [speech hard to hear] I can remember Sharky. I can just remember when [speech hard to hear] died. He was [speech hard to hear] in Garibaldi. I can remember a lot of other names of course.
- HV: So let's start with Ah Loo. What do you remember about him. How did he live?
- BS: He lived at Garibaldi. He came back to Garibaldi during the depression. I don't think he was originally a Garibaldi person. When things got really tight during the depression they came back. Ah Moy was the same. He did live at Garibaldi originally, then he went away and came back during the depression. They were both tin miners.
- HV: I wonder why they came back to Garibaldi rather than...?
- BS: There was just no where else. They were hard up.
- HV: And in Garibaldi they weren't troubled by anyone they were left alone?
- BS: I tormented them. A little bit of that went on. Pity we don't have my sister because she would remember a lot more than I would. When she was a toddler she went everywhere with Uncle Bill. Her and Uncle Bill when she was little. There was Ah Chung(?). He was the one they called Maker Meg(?).
- HV: And he lived actually down near the Argus did he?
- BS: About half way between. Of course there were houses and homes all the way across. Temporary homes like [speech hard to hear]. Europeans lived there as well in that area.
- HV: When you say they were temporary homes all the way through...
- BS: Temporary by today's standard. But they were all [speech hard to hear].
- HV: And did people have more than one home like one at the mine and one back in Gari?
- BS: Old Laa Gaa did. Do remember that pig oven we saw back at the bottom of Lebrinna. He had a camp there, but he also had a house at Garibaldi.
- HV: He had two?
- BS: Yes so they say [speech hard to hear]. He was one of the head sharangs, he employed a lot of Europeans once stage.
- HV: Where did he work?
- BS: At Garibaldi. He bought a fair size. What we called a barge. The tin mining in those days was like a big open quarry I suppose you would call it. They had machinery and pumps. It was mounted onto a floating [speech hard to hear]. It didn't float when it was working. When you wanted to shift you would let the mine fill up with water and float it into position. [speech hard to hear] once stage. Then there was old [speech hard to hear]. Dad bought his last [speech hard to hear] off him. He must have been in a fairly good way to.
- HV: What was the steam engine used for?
- BS: [speech hard to hear] you see when [speech hard to hear] washed the bank away [speech hard to hear] because you had to lift the mixture of water and gravel to find [speech hard to hear] in the rock. If you didn't have to, it was all the better working on the side of a hill. Mostly you had to lift them. Because the engine was used to drive the - what we call a gravel pump. They were [speech hard to hear] pump. They pumped the mixture of sand and water [speech hard to hear]. A lot of mining was done that way. Sometimes they were used to drive a pressure pump with natural pressure. That's what the conservationists don't like.

HV: Why's that?

BS: Tin mining did a lot of damage to the country and you [speech hard to hear].

HV: That's true. So the miners had to cut forest at that stage to feed their steam engines and keep [speech hard to hear].

BS: If they had to use a steam engine [speech hard to hear] wood fire. They used natural pressure [speech hard to hear].

HV: I suppose most of the Chinese didn't have steam engines. They didn't have to be foresters as well?

BS: No they weren't in that big a way. [speech hard to hear] he worked for a long time but I never knew him to use machinery he must have used natural pressure. A matter of fact, I think he use to employ Europeans.

HV: He did as well?

BS: Yes. He was the one [speech hard to hear] who assaulted when they moved to Launceston.

HV: Did you know him?

BS: Yes I knew him.

HV: What sort of a man was he?

BS: He was sort of a social type of man. He use to like to socialise a lot. Like if we went to a football match or a sports meeting he use to like to buy ice creams for the children. He would get up on the stage and sing a song.

HV: Really, where did he do that?

BS: Pioneer. We use to have [speech hard to hear] in them days. Concerts and that.

HV: Did he sing any Chinese songs?

BS: Yes.

HV: Did he speak any English?

BS: Oh yes we could understand him. Perhaps he wasn't that clear but we could understand him.

HV: You never spoke Chinese that stage?

BS: No, it was bit of a taboo subject.

HV: Was it?

BS: Not that they considered any stigma to it, but sometimes the people thought there was a disadvantage. Personally it never affected me though. [speech hard to hear] he was very young and he retained the ability all the way through. His brother Bill could speak when he was young but got out of practice as he got older. He could still understand it but he couldn't speak it. Well he could but it was an embarrassment to him. He'd hear and old chap talking to him in Chinese and he'd answer in English. But apparently my grandfather could speak fairly good English, what I've heard of him. And that Mrs Moore when she dug up records where he signed the marriage register. Apparently he [speech hard to hear] she did give me a copy of the document where he took up a house(?) licence at Garibaldi.

HV: Was that in his own writing?

BS: Apparently he signed his own name in European writing. I don't know about that.

HV: That was fairly an unusual talent from what we can gather.

BS: Well as I say he was probably 15 or 16 years older than my grandmother. He could have been over 30 before he came out here. Which was a bit old to start settling down. Dad, he could speak fairly fluently. He did a lot of interpreting for him. He told me a lot of things about him. They used dried orange peel to flavour foul soup. Well we still do and they also had a certain amount of poison stone fish.

HV: What for?

BS: According to what I can make out about it, they reckon it helped to get them to sleep of a night. The sting of the cold frosty nights; they didn't feel the cold so much. It must have had the same effect as our sleeping pill I think.

HV: They had some special way of preparing it?

BS: Well they just used to cook it I think. Dad was asking how they could eat it, he said is it deadly poisonous and they said yes. Well it must be because it was preserved. They said it use to come out from China preserved. And the bloke said they would have it fresh if they could get it here. One of these old blokes was chopping one of these fish up one day and a bit fell on the floor and the cat grabbed it before he could stop it and it killed the cat [speech hard to hear].

HV: Is this something your father told you?

BS: Yes.

HV: Did your father live nearby to your grandparents at Garibaldi or did they [speech hard to hear].

BS: No my grandfather was dead long before dad went there. No he lived at where I showed you [speech hard to hear]. My earliest memories of my grandmother was she kept family for the youngest daughter. Dad's younger sister died fairly young. And they lived half way between the Argus and Garibaldi over the back there. My first memories of her she was housekeeping for her daughters family. She had glaucoma very bad and lost one eye. She had a real peaches and cream English complexion. And quite a good singing voice.

HV: Casting your mind back to Garibaldi, do you remember how many houses - do you remember there?

BS: About six I think.

HV: When was that?

BS: 1936. I don't know if they were all occupied. Some were. The place sort of fluctuated, everyone sort of left and then some came back because the first mining was all done with a big shovel and a wheel barrow which [speech hard to hear] later on some one developed the big sluice box and the nozzle.

[end of interview because speech is not clear]